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BLACK ARCHIVES OF MID-AMERICA
PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, August 17, 2006

Gem Theatre
1615 East 18th Street
Kansas City, Missouri

- - -

Appearances:

Mr. Jay Nixon, Missouri Attorney General
Mr. Douglas E. Nelson, Deputy Chief of Staff

1 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Good evening.
2 Welcome and thank you for coming this evening. I am
3 Jay Nixon, your attorney general. I want to
4 introduce some of the folks from my office who are
5 here and are here to help. We have out in the
6 crowd, working the crowd we have James Klahr, and we
7 should have out in front Tonya Holmes. Also Sarah
8 Madden is here, folks at the sign-up sheet.

9 At various times this evening, as we move
10 through the process up here, I will be joined by my
11 Deputy Chief of Staff and head of our tour division
12 Doug Nelson. Also Linda Manlove, Assistant Attorney
13 General in my Kansas City office, will be taking a
14 stint and here to help. As well as Trey Hanna, our
15 non-profit guru in the Attorney General's Office.

16 I have about four or five minutes of short
17 comments to open this up, and then we will begin to
18 hear from folks. I want to first thank everyone for
19 coming. Thank you for your interest and obvious
20 commitment to the Black Archives of Mid-America. I
21 believe the Black Archives is a vitally important
22 institution, and by being here you too are showing
23 that this community agrees. Black Archives was a
24 dream of Horace Peterson, a real visionary for the
25 possibilities of restoring the historic 18th and

1 Vine district. Mr. Peterson was taken from us more
2 than a decade ago. I wish he could have walked
3 through this area today, to see all that this
4 district has become and what it is still becoming.
5 Including this beautifully renovated theater that is
6 now a part of the American Jazz Museum.

7 I have asked Mrs. Barbara Peterson to be
8 here this evening and to offer us a glimpse of
9 Horace's dreams of the Black Archives and her vision
10 also. She will be speaking in a few moments, and it
11 is my hope that whatever resolution for the archives
12 that the community can achieve in these next few
13 weeks and months stays true to the original vision
14 Mr. Peterson and his friends and neighbors had when
15 they began this process.

16 Of course the reason we are all here
17 tonight is the Black Archives is not at present the
18 proud institution that it once was and we want to
19 see again. As Attorney General I act as steward for
20 the state's non-profit assets. Over the years I
21 have held numerous public hearings around the state
22 as part of that role to protect those assets and so
23 its citizens can be heard. My concern with the
24 Black Archives is that we have a place and entity
25 that must preserve and maintain these important

1 artifacts and these documents in such a way that the

2 community realizes the full benefit of this
3 resource.

4 For the better part of the last seven or
5 eight months my staff has been in communication with
6 the management of the Black Archives and numerous
7 other members of the community, stressing to all the
8 need to come into compliance with our state
9 non-profit ordinance. Unfortunately that was not
10 possible. The Black Archives was administratively
11 dissolved as a corporation on January 5th by the
12 Secretary of State's office, and was just reinstated
13 yesterday, August 16th, with their paperwork finally
14 being completed.

15 The operational problems have been
16 numerous and ongoing. They have kept this
17 institution from fully serving the community. There
18 have been problems with the archives being open and
19 accessible on a regular basis. We have had
20 investigators looking into these and other
21 complaints for several months. But our focus here
22 tonight is not to review allegations about prior
23 management or mismanagement at this institution.
24 Courtrooms are where such allegations should be made
25 and proven, and I can go there if I need to. But a

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1 courtroom cannot return the Black Archives to the
2 place of inspiration that Mr. Peterson dreamed of

3 and that this city and this region longs for. Only
4 this community can do that. That is why tonight I
5 felt it was important to see if we could start that
6 kind of dialogue in this community that is going to
7 be necessary to produce the support that will save
8 and prosper this institution.

9 My hope is that this will be a forum for
10 ideas about what the Black Archives should be and
11 can be, and how to best achieve this turn-around.
12 The materials in the Black Archives are
13 irreplaceable. The books and papers and museum
14 pieces, the oral history that has been painstakingly
15 written down, provide tangible evidence of the
16 significant accomplishments of African Americans in
17 the midwest in the mid 19th century to the present
18 day. These links must be preserved and they must be
19 accessible, or today's generation and those to come,
20 a generation in real human heroes of inspiration
21 will never know who went before them.

22 And when you boil it down, that is really
23 what the Black Archives or any world class museum is
24 all about, preservation and accessibility. Right
25 now the priceless assets of the archives are not

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1 adequately preserved and they are not adequately
2 accessible. So we are here to listen and help put a
3 solution together to make it work. If a solution

4 cannot be found, a judge may have to determine where
5 the archives assets will end up, and none of us want
6 that. I am certainly not ready to go there. I
7 believe a solution can be found and it starts here
8 tonight.

9 Now as I mentioned, we are very fortunate
10 to have Mrs. Barbara Peterson with us to offer us
11 some history and insight into the Black Archives and
12 its founder. After Mrs. Peterson we will move into
13 the public testimony. Professor Gillis, a noted
14 scholar and author from Central Missouri State
15 University, is here to offer some insight from an
16 academic perspective. And after Professor Gillis we
17 will hear from two emissaries from Jefferson City,
18 Senator Wilson and Representative Sharon Brooks, who
19 played a key role in shedding light on the current
20 situation of the archives, and who will no doubt
21 continue to work hard to restore the Black Archives
22 to what we all believe it should be.

23 When they are finished, we have quite a
24 number of people who have asked to speak here
25 tonight. I am asking that everyone keep their

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1 remarks to under five minutes, so that the largest
2 number of people will have a chance to be heard. We
3 have a lovely time keeper and gongesque thing that
4 will sound. Let me hear the sounds. That's not

5 loud. We thought appropriate. Also an air horn is
6 available if needed. So the time keeper will be
7 down there for those who need it. We are scheduled
8 to go to 9 p.m. tonight. If time becomes an issue
9 for you or us, several members of my staff are here
10 to help take written testimony to be considered and
11 become part of this record.

12 I should also note we have a court
13 reporter here that will be taking down all the
14 testimony this evening. That testimony will be
15 available on the completion of this transcript on
16 our website. And anyone who desires a copy of that
17 and doesn't have access to that website should feel
18 very free to give us a call and we will make sure
19 that you have a copy of that transcript. We are
20 also likely to be joined by Mayor Pro Tem Alvin
21 Brooks here tonight. The reason we are here is
22 about coming up with solutions. And I look forward
23 to hearing your ideas and comments. With that, I
24 wish you would all join me in welcoming to the
25 podium Mrs. Barbara Peterson.

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1 MRS. BARBARA PETERSON: Thank you very
2 much. That was very kind of you. I appreciate it.
3 Well, good evening. As you know my name is Barbara
4 Peterson. I am the widow of the founder and former
5 executive director of the Black Archives of

6 Mid-America, Mr. Horace M. Peterson, III. My thanks
7 to the Attorney General's Office for inviting me to
8 make a statement at this hearing. In addition, I
9 want to thank all of you for taking the time to come
10 out tonight to show your support for the archives
11 and to participate in this hearing.

12 I am going to provide some context for
13 this hearing into the future of these archives by
14 providing a brief history of the organization, some
15 perspective on the vision of its founder, and
16 thoughts on the importance and future direction of
17 the archives.

18 The archives was established in the summer
19 of 1974 and operated from a temporary office on the
20 second floor of the Coaches Council YMCA Building,
21 soon to be the Buck O'Neil Education Center at 18th
22 and Paseo. Starting with his own personal
23 collection of artifacts, letters, historical
24 documents, old photographs and newspaper clippings
25 about black people in the Kansas City area, and with

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1 a great deal of passion, enthusiasm, conviction,
2 tenacity and perseverance, Horace began the task of
3 selling his idea to all who would listen.

4 The goal was to establish an organization
5 dedicated to the collection and preservation of
6 documents and artifacts related specifically to the

7 history of African Americans in the midwest, and to
8 explore the meaning of that experience and its
9 impact on the future development of the culture.

10 As a research organization, the archives
11 will conduct critical and exhaustive investigation
12 into the history of the local African American
13 community in order to challenge and revise accepted
14 conclusions in light of newly discovered facts.

15 Finally, the organization would direct its
16 efforts to the development of special projects to
17 create greater community awareness of its roots,
18 and encourage greater community participation in its
19 continued development. He persuaded KCMO TV 5 to
20 air a series of programs called Black Archives
21 Presents. A program which addressed topics
22 concerning black culture and black achievement. The
23 program served as a medium for his message about the
24 archives. It caught the public's attention and
25 imagination and contributions began to flow in.

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1 With a core group of dedicated
2 supporters, the archives set up its first exhibit at
3 the public library in the rotunda of City Hall in
4 November 1975. The purpose of this and subsequent
5 exhibits was to make people aware of the
6 possibilities of the rich black cultural treasures
7 held locally.

8 The concept of an archives is not well
9 understood outside the community of scholars.
10 Horace was determined to explore its limits. He
11 embarked on an effort to gain knowledge and skills
12 in the area beginning with the Kansas City Public
13 Library. From there he went to the archives section
14 of the Heritage Truman Memorial Library, to the
15 Kansas City Museum, and ultimately with the help of
16 the late Honorable Richard Bolling, to the National
17 Archives in Washington, D.C. for formal training.
18 He served an internship at the National Archives
19 where he established a relationship with the
20 Association For The Study of African American Life
21 and History, founded in the early 1930's by the late
22 Carter G. Woodson. In August of 1979, a charter
23 chapter of the organization was established in
24 Kansas City by the archives.

25 As with most newly established

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1 organizations, securing financial support was a
2 significant challenge in the early years. With the
3 help of his friends and supporters, Horace managed
4 to assemble a competent professional staff, and to
5 secure a building to house not only archives, but a
6 regional black history museum. The building,
7 located at 2033 Vine Street, which still houses the
8 archives, was station house of Fire Engine Company

9 Number 11, founded as an all black fire fighting
10 company in the early history of Kansas City. From
11 this base of operations the archives became a
12 vibrant and integral part of a culture of a Kansas
13 City African American community and of the Kansas
14 City community as a whole. Later exhibits and
15 events were presented during Black History Month.

16 In 1980, for example, the archives, after
17 months of negotiations with the National Archives in
18 Washington, D.C., opened an exhibit of the
19 Emancipation Proclamation in Kansas City. The
20 success of this venture made Kansas City the third
21 city since 1954 to have displayed the document
22 outside its permanent home. Ms. Azie Taylor Morton,
23 the first black woman treasurer of the United
24 States, was the guest speaker at the opening of the
25 exhibit. In 1988 A Salute To Black Contractors

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1 exhibit was accompanied by a series of symposia led
2 by nationally and regionally known professors,
3 politicians, judges and educators, including the
4 Honorable Leon A. Higginbotham, former justice of
5 the United States Supreme Court for the Third
6 Circuit, Former Congressman Alan Wheat of the Fifth
7 District, Dr. Arvah E. Strickland of the University
8 of Missouri at Columbia and many others held
9 symposium at that event. The symposia were

10 broadcast live to Missouri high school students via
11 the Missouri School Board's education satellite
12 network and were available for viewing on American
13 Cablevision's community channel.

14 The archives initiated Juneteenth
15 Celebrations in Kansas City, which focused not only
16 on black history, education, health and politics in
17 the black community, but also celebrated
18 accomplishments of the residents. Juneteenth
19 activities included a parade, awards program, the
20 crowning of Mr. and Ms. Juneteenth, selection of a
21 man or woman of the year, athletic competitions,
22 musical and theatrical entertainment.

23 Through innovation and creativity, the
24 archives expanded its reach to become a catalyst for
25 community development. In 1986 the archives

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1 spearheaded the development and submittal of an
2 application to the National Register of Historic
3 Places, which culminated in the designation of a
4 portion of the Santa Fe neighborhood, one of the
5 first planned developments in Kansas City, and
6 played a significant role in the local civil rights
7 movement, to the National Register.

8 For further tangible evidence of the power
9 of the archives, one can only take a look at the
10 Negro League's Baseball Museum, a world class

11 nationally recognized museum which began as a vision
12 of the archives, and the American Jazz Museum. The
13 entire museum complex, though somewhat different
14 from what was originally envisioned, was an
15 outgrowth of the activism of the archives.

16 These are but a few examples of what the
17 archives has contributed to the community. There
18 are many, many other highlights from the history of
19 the organization. And I am sure that many of you in
20 the audience tonight can and will add a few during
21 your testimony tonight. My point, however, is just
22 to show the depth of the possibilities that Horace
23 believed the archives could achieve. Which brings
24 me to the vision.

25 It is not a stretch by any measure to

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1 describe the founder of the archives as a visionary.
2 The study of history for so many people is a mundane
3 task. For Horace it was a labor of love, because he
4 could see the potential for using our history as a
5 mechanism for future growth and development of a
6 community. By promoting awareness of our history,
7 he saw a mechanism for bringing the community
8 together through our common past. A cohesive,
9 unified community working together to build on what
10 had gone before. I think that he envisioned the
11 archives of not only the keeper of the history of

12 the community, but as a Griot who would educate the
13 young and the old, and as a vibrant facilitator of
14 new ideas that would improve the quality of life for
15 everyone in the community. It was and indeed still
16 is a grand and important vision.

17 I sincerely believe that Horace's vision
18 for and the mission of the archives is still vitally
19 important today as it was when the organization was
20 founded. I believe that it is important that the
21 archives reclaim this vision and mission. It is
22 important that the youth of our community understand
23 the role the community has played in the development
24 of Kansas City, for it will help to see the value of
25 their lives and that they can make a difference in

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1 the community.

2 It is important that we take pride in what
3 our community has accomplished and that we
4 acknowledge the contributions the black community
5 has made to the larger Kansas City metropolitan
6 area.

7 It is my hope that with the help of the
8 community, and those who are here tonight, that the
9 archives will once again find its footing and
10 refocus its efforts. About a year ago I was asked
11 to attend a meeting of community leaders and archive
12 supporters to talk about what could be done to

13 assist the archives. This group contacted the
14 archives to initiate a dialogue. Unfortunately, we
15 have not received a response. I am encouraged,
16 however, by the recent renewed interest in the
17 archives. Recently I have been contacted by the
18 Kansas City Public Library and the Kansas City Parks
19 and Recreation Department regarding the possible
20 assistance to the organization. I hope that this
21 renewed interest will bear fruit.

22 As for the future of the archives, it is
23 my humble opinion that a critical element of the
24 equation is the need for fresh innovative leadership
25 with positive, enthusiastic, tenacious, persistent

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1 leadership of the type that Horace displayed will
2 come and volunteer in financial and other support
3 that the organization needs. It will take
4 leadership with similar vision, organizational
5 management and fund raising skills. Leadership with
6 the ability to build bridges with the community it
7 serves, and with a larger community in a
8 collaborative effort to meet the organization's
9 mission.

10 It is my hope that those of us here
11 tonight, and many others who could not be here, but
12 who have previously expressed an interest in the
13 archives and support for the archives, will commit

14 their time and talent to restoring Horace's legacy.
15 Thank you very much.

16 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Thank you very
17 much. The first witness will be Dr. Delia Cook
18 Gillis from the Central Missouri State University
19 Department of History. With Senator Wilson on
20 deck.

21 DR. DELIA GILLIS: Good evening. I am Dr.
22 Delia Gillis from Central Missouri State
23 University. And I would like to thank the Honorable
24 Jay Nixon, our Attorney General for inviting me to
25 testify before this Committee on the state of Black

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1 Archives in Mid-America.

2 Before I begin my formal remarks, I would
3 like to talk a little bit about how I became
4 acquainted with the Black Archives and the work that
5 I have done as well as that of my students.
6 Unfortunately I never had a chance to meet Mr.
7 Horace Peterson. I did in fact have an opportunity
8 to talk with him by telephone. I called him to
9 inquire about NAACP records and the possibility of
10 test cases concerning the first black student
11 enrolled at Central Missouri State University. He
12 told me he did not think that he had anything in his
13 collection, but he did point me to some community
14 members which included Mr. Irwin Dicus of the

15 NAACP. And as the conversation closed, he politely
16 asked me for a copy of my master's thesis when I was
17 done. So immediately in the summer of 1992 I did
18 bring that document to the archives, and I have had
19 a relationship with him ever since.

20 For the past 14 years I have used the
21 archives for my own research on Kansas City, both
22 particularly teaching students at the University of
23 Missouri Kansas City and Central Missouri State
24 University. And indeed I am very humble tonight to
25 address you, because even if I don't know you

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1 personally, I know you from photographs, news
2 clippings, from master's thesis and honors papers
3 and projects that my students have worked on.

4 The unfortunate circumstance of the recent
5 dissolution of the Black Archives however can give
6 new life and provide a vital opportunity to preserve
7 and illuminate the rich archives in this state on
8 African American life and culture. With state
9 support and oversight, our community can witness the
10 rehabilitation of its non-profit status and
11 regulatory compliance.

12 The Black Archives from its inception has
13 been an anchor for redevelopment of the historic
14 18th and Vine District, and it should therefore
15 remain in this community. If this happens, Kansas

16 City would be poised to have its own Renaissance
17 that would rival the repository of the Schomburg in
18 New York, the DuSable in Chicago and the Amistad in
19 New Orleans. And I do not make those proclamations
20 lightly.

21 I am a native Virginian, and Missouri is
22 my transplanted home. And one of the things that I
23 have found as a scholar is that Kansas Citians are
24 often shy about our heritage and about our
25 accomplishments. And if you look in the historical

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1 literature, you can find so much work on New York
2 City or Chicago or Atlanta. Yet those same works
3 have yet to be produced on Kansas City. I hope to
4 add to that body of work with my photographic
5 history that will come out later this year.

6 The collections at the Black Archives are
7 not only significant to Kansas City, to the state,
8 to the midwest, but they have national prominence as
9 well. The Chester A. and Ada Crogman Franklin
10 Papers, the Minnie Crosthwaite collection, the
11 Provident-Wheatley Hospital Collection, and material
12 culture such as Aunt Lucy's Cabin, photographs and
13 even clothing like an original Klu Klux Klan robe
14 are just a few of the archive's priceless holdings.
15 Truly the first check would be to identify, preserve
16 and access the myriad holdings that are not even

17 known to the public.

18 It is incumbent upon our state government
19 today to live up to the Show-Me state motto and
20 provide the leadership necessary to enable the Black
21 Archives to partner with our federal, state, local
22 and private organizations to meet its potential and
23 benefit for all of our citizens.

24 And just in the short time since I was
25 contacted, I have done some research, and right now

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1 there is a quarter of a million grant available with
2 a due date of October for the process of collection
3 preservation. There is also monies available for
4 the National Endowment for the Humanities Collection
5 to digitize collections as well. So I believe the
6 possibilities are endless and we can only build upon
7 that vision.

8 In closing, let me again tell you how I
9 know about Horace Peterson and the Black Archives
10 and its vision. At Central Missouri State
11 University in my Department Chairman's office, there
12 is a beautiful plaque on his wall to his mother.
13 And it was from Mr. Peterson and the Black
14 Archives. And I inquired of Dr. Peak one day,
15 "Well, why is it that you have on your wall this
16 plaque?" And he kindly shared with me the story of
17 his mother and Horace Peterson's hard work in

18 bringing Aunt Lucy's cabin all the way from Chatham
19 County. And it is those stories that is most
20 incumbent upon us to preserve, to protect. And I
21 gladly join you in that effort. Thank you.

22 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Senator Yvonne
23 Wilson with Representative Sharon Sanders Brooks on
24 deck.

25 SENATOR YVONNE WILSON: Good evening

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1 everybody. First of all, I want to thank you for
2 being here. And secondly, I want to thank the
3 Attorney General for bringing this forum to its
4 rightful place, right here in the community. I
5 must say that I did expect more people to be here.
6 This is the community of area where the Black
7 Archives had its beginning. Mrs. Peterson very
8 beautifully gave the historical background of how
9 hard Horace worked to put the Black Archives
10 together and to keep it moving. I had a great
11 opportunity of knowing Horace. He and my father
12 were very good friends. Horace encouraged me to go
13 to the Smithsonian and take a two week course in
14 museum studies. While he was well into a number of
15 years in the experience of museum studies, the Bruce
16 Watkins Cultural Heritage Center was formed. Both
17 with two very different missions, he knew the
18 importance of my having that kind of training. And

19 he and I worked together over the years, talking
20 back and forth about what we need to do to preserve
21 the history of our African American culture. We
22 must, for the sake of our children and our
23 children's children, we must have a repository
24 where, as Dr. Cook stated, she has been using that
25 facility. Our children need that as a resource.

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1 And it is my hope that tonight we will develop a
2 plan. We are here tonight for solutions. And I
3 hope that a part of that solution would be the
4 strong message that the Black Archives should be
5 right here in the 18th and Vine historical site
6 where it had its beginnings and will have greater
7 use.

8 I am also hoping that we are looking very
9 seriously at how we are going to fund the efforts.
10 It takes money. You know that it takes money. Some
11 people have stepped up to the plate. I would hope
12 that because of the decision to leave it here in the
13 community where it belongs, that these corporations
14 and these companies who are willing to help, I would
15 hope that they would continue to have that desire to
16 come in and give that assistance, whether it is
17 financial or whatever resource that is needed for
18 the Black Archives to thrive.

19 Lastly, we know that it takes leadership.

20 We must put into place a board, a diverse board.
21 And by diverse I mean an attorney, an accountant, a
22 person who knows how to go out and raise money. We
23 need a board that has integrity so that the
24 community, all of the communities and corporations
25 will say I trust what the effort that is made to

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1 revive the Black Archives. With your help I look
2 forward to the Black Archives being revived. Thanks
3 for being here tonight.

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Representative
5 Sharon Sanders Brooks with Representative Melba
6 Curls on deck.

7 REPRESENTATIVE SHARON BROOKS: Good
8 evening everyone and welcome to Missouri's 37th
9 Legislative District which I humbly represent.
10 Thank each and every one of you for being here
11 tonight. Preserving the legacy, that is my theme,
12 and that is what we must do. The Black Archives of
13 Mid-America belongs to the community. And we, the
14 collective community, have not been good stewards.
15 We allowed it to wither on the vine. How did we do
16 that? By not contributing to the upkeep of the
17 Black Archives financially, by in-kind services, or
18 willing to volunteer. We allowed it to wither on
19 the vine. So therefore we the collective must help
20 it, by writing checks, being willing to volunteer

21 and lend our in-kind services before we go to others
22 to ask for help. They should move forward with
23 financial contributions from us, be it two dollars
24 or more.

25 We tried to meet, as it has been stated

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1 earlier, and I am saddened that we were not able to
2 meet and get it resolved before the July 15th
3 deadline. \$800,000 was on the table. New federal
4 dollars that the Association for African American
5 Museums has been working on for over 20 years with
6 the Federal Government. This was the first year of
7 appropriations, and it indeed had been my hope that
8 we would have been eligible to apply, but that did
9 not happen.

10 I speak here tonight not as merely a state
11 representative and a public servant, I speak tonight
12 as a member of the Association For The Study of
13 African American Life and History. A founding
14 member of the African Military Historical
15 Association under the leadership of Lieutenant Blye.
16 A member of the Missouri Historical Association, and
17 a member of the Association for African American
18 Museums.

19 Tonight as we sit here, Fisk University is
20 having a fire sale of its African American art.
21 Many of you have read about it. They have 101

22 pieces and two of them are on sale, because they do
23 not have the necessary financial support from their
24 alumni and others, they are selling their artwork.
25 Lincoln University in Pennsylvania had artwork worth

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1 six billion dollars. They were sued because it was
2 not adequately being preserved, and they received 80
3 million. I said it was worth six billion and they
4 received 80 million in exchange from the state. I
5 am looking at the time keeper. I will be brief.

6 What I would like to see the outcome from
7 tonight's meeting first of all, is individuals
8 willing to sign up and show up to clean up the trash
9 and the debris that has been dumped at 2033 Vine. I
10 will be looking to meet you there. That is the
11 first thing we have to do. That someone would have
12 the audacity to throw trash at our heritage. We
13 don't need a fund raiser to do that. We can show up
14 with our gloves and get that trash picked up.

15 The next thing is we need to reconstitute
16 a board of directors with board members serving a
17 designated number of years and rotating off. We
18 need Black Archives board members and staff and
19 volunteers who are knowledgeable of and willing to
20 adhere to the American Association of Museum
21 standards for the operation of the institution in
22 order for it to be competitive for federal, state,

23 corporate, foundation and museum specific funding.
24 When the archives was founded in 1974, there were
25 far fewer African American museums than there are

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1 now. There are over 300. But many of them are
2 struggling financially, including the newly opened
3 Muhammad Ali Museum. So we here in Kansas City must
4 be willing to do all that we can do. And once
5 again, all non-profits are under the jurisdiction of
6 the Attorney General, for those who inquired and
7 wanted to know why Jay Nixon was doing this. He
8 could have come in and not held a public hearing and
9 automatically disbanded the entire board and the
10 operations and moved forward. But he did not do
11 that. And I thank you for having the sensitivity to
12 do that. I will meet you at 2033 Vine at the
13 clean-up at the designated time. I thank you.

14 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Melba Curls
15 followed by Gary Kremer.

16 REPRESENTATIVE MELBA CURLS: I will be
17 brief. How is everyone? I am State Representative
18 Melba Curls. I am from the 41st District, which is
19 not in this area, but I feel this is my area. I
20 grew up around here. I used to go to Lincoln
21 Theater. I mean I know this area, and I know the
22 Black Archives. And I just want to say to Barbara,
23 we are going to do this.

24 I knew Horace, and those of you who knew
25 Horace Peterson knew that the Black Archives was his

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1 passion. He was committed to it. He had energy.
2 And at the time he had funding. He was the type of
3 person that would go down there, City Hall, wherever
4 he needed to go and get the money. Sometimes he
5 would be kind of rough, but that's what we needed.
6 So we need to get that energy going now and get this
7 done. I too would like to thank the Attorney
8 General for being here. I am here to commit today
9 to whatever needs to be done, I will be there to
10 assist. I don't need to have to be on the board.
11 Now, I don't know about cleaning up, but I will
12 provide a bottle of water for you who will clean up.

13 But I do want the Attorney General to know
14 that we want to keep the dream and the Black
15 Archives functioning. We can do this. All we need
16 to do is be there and be committed like we have been
17 in the past. The people that are here, if you
18 commit tonight, then that will be enough to get us
19 started. Thank you for coming.

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Gary Kremer from
21 the State Historical Society followed by Anthony
22 Arnold.

23 MR. GARY KREMER: Mrs. Peterson. Mr.
24 Nixon. Ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the

25 opportunity to speak here tonight. My name is Gary

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1 Kremer. I am the director of the State Historical
2 Society of Missouri and also of the Western
3 Historical Manuscript Collection, one of the
4 depositories of which is on the University of
5 Missouri campus here in town.

6 I discovered the Black Archives during the
7 late 1970's when I was doing research for a book
8 titled Missouri's Black Heritage, which was first
9 published in 1980 by Forum Press. Over the years I
10 got to know Horace Peterson, III and worked with him
11 on a number of projects aimed at preserving and
12 protecting the documentary heritage of Missouri's
13 African American population. In fact, during the
14 late 1980's, while serving as Missouri State
15 archivist, I facilitated the Black Archives
16 acquisition of African American marriage records in
17 the immediate post-Civil War period, and also the
18 papers of George Washington Carver.

19 I returned to the Black Archives to do
20 research for a revised edition of the Missouri's
21 Black Heritage in 1993. And I also did work there
22 when I was writing about Kansas City's pioneer
23 African American physicians, Dr. Jay Edward Perry,
24 Dr. P.C. Turner and Dr. William J. Tompkins. My
25 work on the Vine Street Corridor and in the Kansas

1 City neighborhood of Leeds, home of Senator Wilson,
2 also took me to the Black Archives.

3 There is no question that the Black
4 Archives of Mid-America holds materials that are
5 important to an understanding of African American
6 life in Kansas City, the State of Missouri and the
7 midwest. The materials on Chester Franklin, Alvin
8 Ailey, Chauncy Downs and Felix Payne, Junior, among
9 others are invaluable. Unfortunately there is also
10 no question, at least in my mind, that the safety of
11 those materials is threatened by a lack of attention
12 to their care, and that those materials have been
13 for some time generally inaccessible to scholars.

14 The materials currently housed in the
15 Black Archives at 2033 Vine Street need to be placed
16 in a facility where humidity and temperature can be
17 controlled in accordance with modern archival
18 standards, or the building needs to be brought up to
19 that level. They also need to be kept safe from the
20 possibility of theft and damage by improper use.
21 They should be cared for by full time professionals
22 trained to handle documents, textiles and other
23 three-dimensional objects. Just as importantly, the
24 facility in which these materials are housed needs
25 to be open to researchers on a regular basis at

1 reasonable hours. I must tell you, over the last
2 decade I have been frustrated on many occasions by
3 my inability to gain access to those rich
4 collections housed at the Black Archives during
5 normal working hours because of the facility's
6 inadequate staffing, due of course to a lack of
7 funds.

8 As a professional historian and as a user
9 of the rich collections of the Black Archives, I
10 hope that the hearings that are being conducted here
11 will lead to the protection of the collections
12 housed at the Black Archives, as well as to their
13 greater accessibility to scholars. I think if that
14 can be accomplished, it will be a great service to
15 all Missourians past, present and future. I am here
16 tonight to offer the assistance of the State
17 Historical Society of Missouri and the Western
18 Historical Manuscript Collection to help in that
19 cause. Thank you very much.

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Anthony Arnold
21 followed by a representative from Congressman
22 Cleaver's office, Norman Curls.

23 MR. ANTHONY ARNOLD: Good evening. My
24 name is Anthony Arnold, and I have served on the
25 board of the Black Archives for the past seven

1 years. And I would like to thank you, Mr. Nixon,
2 for hosting this forum. I would like to thank your
3 staff for the dedication that they did and review
4 and approval of the documents necessary to reinstate
5 the Black Archives.

6 Personally I started not to attend this
7 meeting, because I thought it was going to be one of
8 those kind of sessions. And I want you to know that
9 I am very pleased humbly to say that the positive
10 energy that I have heard from the previous speakers
11 is what Kansas City and the Black Archives needs.
12 Let me also say that it was the past board and the
13 staff who recognized the financial situation that
14 the archives was in several years ago, who went
15 themselves and wrote an article to The Star and to
16 the Call to let the community know that the Black
17 Archives was in trouble. At that time the City had
18 an agreement whereby that it was a descending
19 funding package, 100,000, 67,000, 33,000, and then
20 you were on your own. So right now the archives
21 sits without a budget.

22 So the archives' board and staff were the
23 ones who put a message out to this community,
24 alarming this community that the archives was in
25 trouble. There was not any intent to hide anything,

1 because we all know that this organization belongs

2 to this community. Okay? And it will stay in this
3 community. Now where are we? Where are we now?
4 The last speaker talked about the preservation of
5 those documents. And unfortunately, someone from
6 our own community has stolen the air conditioner
7 recently. We have bought air conditioned units to
8 preserve our documents, but that is of utmost
9 concern to the archives right now. I stand as a
10 long board member here with you tonight, we have
11 formed an ad hoc board, interim board, if you will.
12 We are meeting on a regular basis with the City's
13 parks and recreation and representation from the
14 public library. This is not a closed door session.
15 I hope that this is the beginning of those people
16 who are interested to come out and add comment.
17 Yes, we need to talk about what has happened, but we
18 need to talk about what we need to do now.

19 With the help of Park and Recreation and
20 their consultants, we have completed the new
21 drawings for a 25,000 square foot facility, where
22 20,000 square feet will be operated by the Black
23 Archives. Now is the time, before we make that
24 transitional move, to reshape from the board, its
25 auxiliary boards, its staff, and show the corporate

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1 community of Kansas City that we are ready for the
2 next step. Construction will probably take 18

3 months once the construction documents are approved
4 by the board and a contractor is selected. It is my
5 understanding that this will happen in the fall of
6 '06, and preparing for construction to begin in the
7 spring of '07. Therefore we have plenty of time. I
8 applaud the efforts of one of the speakers that talk
9 about cleaning up, because I have cut the grass and
10 today fixed a water leak out front. Those kind of
11 things need to be done.

12 More importantly what I believe she was
13 saying is that this community needs to be behind the
14 Black Archives. And this community perhaps, as you
15 read the articles, maybe you did not take to heart
16 the dire situation that the archives is in. And
17 perhaps it took the Attorney General's office to
18 bring that attention to the forefront. Well, it is
19 there now, and we collectively need to address that
20 and deal with the plight of the Black Archives.

21 We have for two years accepted donations.
22 And as bad as we need money, and the grants that we
23 have probably just missed, I don't think that's
24 where we are right now. I think that since we are
25 at a home, we need to -- I am a contractor, so we

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1 believe in setting foundations. The foundation had
2 never been set the way it should be for the
3 continuation of funding, both public and private

4 sector. So now let's set this foundation correctly
5 and move forward. I have no idea right now when our
6 next public meeting will be at Parks and Rec, but I
7 challenge some of you to not just come to this
8 meeting, but come to those meetings and participate
9 in the planning process for what will occur within
10 the next 18 months to two years. Thank you.

11 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Norman Curls from
12 Congressman Cleaver's office followed by Mr. Joe
13 Mattox from the Bruce Watkins Cultural Heritage
14 Center.

15 MR. NORMAN CURLS: Good evening to all of
16 you. Outside, when I signed the form, I didn't know
17 I was speaking. I came to listen, not to talk, but
18 in the process. The congressman, who is not in our
19 district for approximately a week, is very
20 interested in the Black Archives. As you well know
21 I think he may have done a eulogy to Satchel Paige
22 and he in turn gave the information to the Black
23 Archives. As Mayor of Kansas City, I think he
24 showed how important the Black Archives was to
25 Kansas City itself. As the Fifth District

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1 Congressman, he will continue to show and support
2 Black Archives as we go forward. That's about all I
3 have to say. Thank you. I will listen.

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Joe Mattox

5 followed by Ajamu Webster from the K.C. Black United
6 Front.

7 MR. JOE MATTOX: Good evening. I am sort
8 of unprepared to make statements, Attorney General.
9 I am the one who called your office on behalf of the
10 Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center, State
11 Museum, and also on behalf of the Historic Kansas
12 City Foundation. We have representatives from those
13 two organizations here now. I don't want to take up
14 too much time, but I'm sure that my comments that
15 those organizations would be a great -- or put great
16 efforts to support great archives in any way
17 possible. Thank you.

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Ajamu Webster
19 followed by Anita Russell.

20 MR. AJAMU WEBSTER: Good evening. First
21 of all, I would like to thank Mr. Nixon and our
22 state representatives Sharon Brooks, state senator,
23 and Barbara Peterson for being here and making this
24 possible. Like many of you, I knew Horace
25 Peterson. And if you knew Horace Peterson, you knew

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1 Horace Peterson. And one of the things about Horace
2 Peterson we all knew was Horace Peterson was
3 extremely passionate about this question of history.
4 As Chair of the National Black United Front Chapter
5 of Kansas City, we have a common bond on this

6 question of history.

7 Just a few things real quickly of how
8 Horace was supportive of us. We operate a Rites Of
9 Passage program for boys and girls that we have had
10 in Kansas City for almost 20 years now. And the
11 Black Archives is a place we brought young men, boys
12 from ages 6 to 18 to get a chance to see and touch
13 the culture that impacted us as a people. To watch
14 the lights go on in their eyes as they can see
15 history, how it works. When we started the
16 city-wide Quantum celebration, it was Horace
17 Peterson and the Black Archives that took a night to
18 help us do what the Black Archives has done with
19 Juneteenth. When we worked with the Black Archives,
20 we discovered from that work that there were also
21 other sacred sites in the Kansas City area. One
22 being the Miller Plantation site up by the airport,
23 which many of you may not be aware of, but Horace
24 Peterson and the Black Archives is aware of it. And
25 of course the Quindaro Ruins.

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1 So we worked to put in place a bi-state
2 committee for the preservation of sacred African
3 American sites. And we really thank the Black
4 Archives for helping to make that happen. In
5 addition to those types of efforts, we are proud to
6 say that the Nowaton (ph) Agreement was donated to

7 the Black Archives by our organization, and with
8 Horace Peterson's thanks, and we really appreciate
9 that.

10 But as we move forward, going ahead, I am
11 here to tell you that our organization is totally
12 committed to the continuation of the Black Archives
13 of Mid-America, because we are committed to the
14 preservation of our history and culture.

15 As Representative Sanders Brooks said, to
16 step up and show up, to put into work to make sure
17 it happens. And finally, one quote from Dr. John
18 Henry Clark. Dr. Clark says, "History is a clock
19 that tells the people its political time of day."
20 So let today be the mark when we in Kansas City,
21 particularly the African American community, go down
22 in history as a rebirth, for rebuilding the Black
23 Archives, but also rebuilding the commitment to the
24 preservation of our history and culture. Thank you
25 very much.

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1 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Anita Russell
2 followed by Aasim Baheyadeen from the Jackson County
3 Combat Commission.

4 MS. ANITA RUSSELL: Good evening. I would
5 like to thank the Attorney General and all others
6 who were responsible for having the meeting here
7 tonight in our community. I am Anita L. Russell,

8 and I am president of the Kansas City, Missouri
9 Branch of the NAACP. And I have a statement that I
10 would like to read from the NAACP. The Kansas City
11 Missouri Branch of the National Association of
12 Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP are very
13 concerned that we are here this evening to discuss
14 the fate of the Black Archives of Mid-America. The
15 state of the archives should never have gotten to
16 this point. As many of you know, the Black Archives
17 has one of the largest collections of African
18 American art, memorabilia and historical materials
19 in the region. It is also a place to learn the
20 history and lifestyles of prominent African American
21 leaders of Kansas City.

22 Since people of color are still in school
23 when American history is told, it is especially
24 important that we preserve the history and the
25 contributions of African Americans. The NAACP would

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1 like to see the Black Archives reestablished and
2 adequate funding secured. Board member selections
3 should be based on skill sets needed to not only
4 bring the archives back into compliance, but to
5 position the archives as a viable 21st Century
6 institution.

7 The board needs to be diverse and
8 representative of the community. Persons selected

9 to the board should have the time to fulfill their
10 duties and possess strong management skill sets.
11 Particularly in key areas such as marketing, legal,
12 and physical expertise. The board should also
13 include other members, such as neighborhood
14 community leaders.

15 The NAACP, along with others in the
16 community, were not aware of the condition the Black
17 Archives is currently in until it appeared in the
18 newspaper. Communication is very important.
19 Consequently, a communications plan should be
20 developed, and the community should be kept informed
21 of developments, the needs and the programs or
22 events in support of the Black Archives.

23 The community needs the Black Archives to
24 be the educational resource and the keeper of
25 African American culture that its founder Horace

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1 Peterson, III wanted it to be.

2 In addition, this is a key legacy we want
3 to be for our young people in this metropolitan
4 Kansas City area. The NAACP is supportive of
5 efforts to bring it back to fruition, positioning
6 the archives into national and international
7 prominence as well. Please contact us to assist in
8 this effort as we have recommendations for enhancing
9 the Black Archives of Mid-America. Thank you.

10 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: On deck is Mr.
11 Leon Dixon after Mr. Aasim Baheyadeen.

12 MR. AASIM BAHEYADEEN: This is a total
13 surprise for me. I didn't know I was speaking
14 tonight. But as I sat there and I listened to the
15 many people who had come before this body of great
16 people, a people whose history needs to be where it
17 is accessible by those who live in this community.
18 I remember Horace Peterson as being a person who had
19 the kind of energies that he would go wherever he
20 needed to go to get whatever he needed to get and to
21 put it into that museum to represent our past, and
22 also give us a theme on what our history should be
23 about.

24 It has been very, very healing to come
25 here tonight and to meet with the people who want to

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1 put it in its proper place. As we work and do other
2 things in our community, at least to preserve those
3 things which are treasures for each and every one of
4 us.

5 My thoughts. I used to go to the Black
6 Archives. I would take children and we would tour
7 the Black Archives. We would see the many, many
8 exhibits that were there. We would read the history
9 of things which had occurred before our time. It is
10 very, very important that we preserve this. It is

11 very important that we leave it where it is or
12 enlarge it. It is very important that we keep
13 dialogue going between our educational system to
14 utilize the Black Archives much more than we have
15 used it in the past. It is important, very
16 important. I thank you gentlemen for coming to
17 Kansas City to give us first swing. Just like Bubba
18 Leo, knock the ball out of the park. It is very
19 important. We have a job to do in the community.
20 The task is on our backs. We need to be there when
21 the doors open again to be the person who inspects
22 and looks at it and don't be satisfied until we see
23 that our children and our children's children will
24 have something to count on for the rest of their
25 lives. Thank you.

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1 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Mr. Leon Dixon
2 followed by Mr. Vic Dyson.
3 MR. LEON DIXON: Good evening everybody.
4 I will make this brief. I too knew Horace Peterson
5 very well. And I would like to say this. The work
6 of the archives has not been in vain. We need the
7 archive to continue its presence for the work that
8 is still as yet to be done. I mean, we talk about
9 the artifacts and so forth, but little has been
10 mentioned about the historical documents we have or
11 written materials that people like Wilson and others

12 in Missouri can be used by researchers and so forth
13 to find out what all has happened with respect to
14 the African Americans right here in Kansas City,
15 Missouri.

16 Now when I say that the work hasn't been
17 completed yet, not too long ago I found out that
18 right here in Kansas City, in the Raytown area and
19 Center High School area, there are places out there
20 that slaves were hidden in the underground
21 railroad. There are all kinds of things like that
22 that we didn't know about. In Gower, Missouri, by
23 Clinton, there was a school that was said to be the
24 Tuskegee of the midwest. They were doing corn when
25 nobody else was doing corn, and it was M.U. and Iowa

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1 State went to them to ask them how to make this corn
2 grow because nobody else could do it. It seems like
3 without Horace's vision, how can we collect
4 materials like that? How can we make them available
5 to various people throughout the community.

6 See look, Horace and I would discuss how
7 we can use this to help our children all along,
8 especially given the work that we do at the Learning
9 Center. And if we would use vital materials made
10 available to put together materials that we could
11 use to educate our children. I mean, you can go on
12 and on about what all Horace was doing and what the

13 archives is doing. In my humble opinion, the Black
14 Archives needs to be a state and national treasure.
15 There shouldn't be any reason why -- I mean, we are
16 talking about the other museums and so forth. But
17 look, nobody hear what Horace did. It took Horace
18 to have a vision. Years from now. Now Horace is
19 dead and gone. People look back. We realize the
20 value of something like the Black Archives. If it
21 was a national treasure or state treasure, we
22 wouldn't be talking about funding, the funding would
23 be available.

24 In conclusion, when we look back over the
25 years, people my age don't remember back in the day

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1 of a famous gospel song, My soul looks back in
2 wonder at how I got older. Years from now, when we
3 are dead and gone, the only way we are going to be
4 able to show the children of that generation, the
5 people of future generations will be able to look
6 back and figure out how we got over to lead the
7 cause, people like us kept vision and institutions
8 like the Black Archives.

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Vic Dyson. On
10 deck Mr. Emanuel Cooper.

11 MR. VIC DYSON: Good evening everyone. My
12 name is Vic Dyson. I am the vice president and
13 director of sales for the Carter Broadcasting

14 Group. Today I want to speak on behalf of the
15 Carter Broadcasting in terms of what we are willing
16 to do. I don't know if you guys know, we have been
17 here in Kansas City 56 years serving the black
18 community. And without you, we wouldn't be here.
19 So what it is all about, I can't believe I am up
20 here. You know I read, and I read a lot. I never
21 read about other museums having these kind of
22 struggles. It seems like we always have these kind
23 of struggles. You know what, with the resources we
24 have in our own community, that makes no sense. We
25 have over 220,000 listeners listening to our radio

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1 stations in Kansas City. And we will be the
2 mouthpiece for the Black Archives.

3 I don't know about you guys, but I am a
4 kid of the business. I have been born and raised in
5 radio and I have my master's in marketing. I am
6 willing to give all of my expertise, all the Carter
7 Broadcast's voice power behind this to make sure
8 that our community will be heard.

9 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Mr. Emanuel
10 Cooper followed by Peggy Brotherton.

11 MR. EMANUEL COOPER: Good evening. Thank
12 you for the opportunity, Attorney General Nixon.
13 Senator Wilson. Representative Brooks. Thank you
14 very much for the opportunity to speak. My name is

15 Emanuel Cooper, Junior and I grew up in this
16 neighborhood. I was born here in Kansas City,
17 Missouri. I live in the same neighborhood that I
18 grew up in as a boy some 50 years ago. I am
19 currently president of the Association For The Study
20 of African American Life and History, the Lorenzo J.
21 Greene Branch.

22 I would like to share a little bit of that
23 history with you in the next few minutes. I also am
24 the Chair and Co-Founder of an organization called
25 the Euphrates Incorporated. Euphrates currently is

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1 working in collaboration with the Association For
2 The Study of African American Life and History.
3 ASALH history is one of a rich heritage. Horace
4 Peterson understood that. We currently serve the
5 State of Missouri and the western section of
6 Kansas. ASALH was founded by Carter G. Woodson.
7 And he subsequently established what we celebrate
8 every year as African American American History
9 Month. That is important. We are now moving toward
10 an understanding of celebrating every day.

11 It is imperative, it is our obligation
12 that we restore, preserve, catalog the collection of
13 the Black Archives of Mid-America. The collection
14 as well as the preservation of the institution. It
15 is important that we do not change the original

16 meaning and purpose of that institution. It is a
17 unique mission that it has. It is our
18 responsibility that we safeguard that.

19 This evening I would like to extend an
20 invitation to the Black Archives and to the
21 community. We have collectively been working on,
22 the last three years, the research, development and
23 planning of a major initiative. That major
24 initiative consists of 8 or 12 years of
25 participating projected work. Right now our focus

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1 is on one aspect of that major initiative and it is
2 a celebration of the Aaron Douglas Regional
3 Celebration that will take place in 2007 between
4 September and December of that year.

5 Now we heard this evening that the
6 archives has its physical origins in the YMCA
7 building on Paseo, which still stands. It is a very
8 interesting coincidence that Aaron Douglas, who by
9 the way became the father of the visual arts
10 movement for Howard Design experience. Aaron
11 Douglas lived in the YMCA building. He would walk
12 out the front door in the morning, turn right and
13 head south to the corner and turn right one more
14 time and head west to Lincoln High School at 19th
15 and Tracy at that time. We are talking about 1923,
16 1925. He would leave the wife and head for Lincoln

17 High School and he would teach art. Aaron Douglas
18 was born in Topeka, Kansas. Studied in Lincoln,
19 Nebraska. Had his first formal art class outside of
20 high school at the Detroit Museum in Detroit,
21 Michigan.

22 Aaron left our community inspired by the
23 state and became a member of the NAACP. He actually
24 wanted to study in Paris at the Sorbonne and he got
25 as far as New York City. In New York City he met

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1 people like W.B. Boyce, Langston Hughes, Zoe Horace,
2 Ryan Weece and Charles Lowes and others. By the
3 time his visit to New York was over, this guy who is
4 considered the father of the Civil Rights movement.

5 Now why is that significant? It is
6 significant because it was the first time in the
7 American experience African Americans felt they had
8 heritage of value. Did you hear me? The first
9 time. We had no heritage. We were told we had no
10 history. We are talking about 1992. What Horace
11 Peterson has done with the Black Archives of
12 Mid-America is planted a seed. It is our
13 responsibility to nurture that seed. It is our
14 responsibility to nurture that seed. We offer, The
15 Association For The Study of American Black Life and
16 History in collaboration with Euphrates offer this
17 evening an invitation for the archives and other

18 members in our community, the cultural arts
19 community, to partner with us, to collaborate with
20 us, to fulfill the major initiative. Not to change
21 the uniqueness of individual institutions, but to
22 enhance or strengthen and ensure the future of those
23 institutions.

24 Our first project, as I shared with you,
25 is the Aaron Douglas Regional Celebration. We put

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1 that on the table. If we work together as a unified
2 force, there is only one thing that can happen, a
3 unique success that Kansas City has never seen
4 before. Thank you for your time.

5 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Peggy Brotherton
6 followed by Kenneth Ford.

7 MS. PEGGY BROTHERTON: Thank you very
8 much. Thank you, Attorney Nixon, for allowing the
9 opportunity to speak to you. I believe it was the
10 professor, she said she was from Virginia. I am a
11 transplant of Texas. I am a native Texan
12 transplanted to Missouri, and I am going to become a
13 Missourian. So I want to say, when I heard about
14 this information, I am trying to learn Missouri, I
15 am now a program administrator for my 501c(3)
16 organization, called Inner Life Ministries. We are
17 in compliance and have always been in compliance.
18 So we understand what is going on.

19 I believe in the Black Archives. Our
20 history is what makes us who we are. We never, ever
21 should forget from whence we came. What has
22 happened to our children today is the fact that they
23 don't know from whence we came. I believe it is
24 because their parents are not doing that. A part of
25 our organization has to do with the adults, in our

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1 seminars. And the second component is the youth
2 entrepreneur program.

3 When I learned what the archives were
4 about, we said, Yeah, we are talking about this as
5 adults. What about our children? We can put them
6 to use. We can put them to volunteer, use them as
7 volunteers. I am willing to volunteer. I am a
8 financial analyst and negotiator. So I am willing
9 to give my time, on computers. I can do all that
10 kind of stuff. So if you need some help. Money
11 isn't an issue. We are talking about what we
12 believe in. The things that we should be doing.
13 But involve the children. They are supposed to be
14 our future. So everybody should rally the children
15 around so our school system, not just people of
16 color, but all people. That's what it is about.
17 Because we are in this thing together. We should
18 stay together and keep it here in this area. And I
19 am willing to do anything possible. Thank you.

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Kenneth Ford
21 then Michelle Freeman.
22 MR. KENNETH FORD: Good evening everyone.
23 I am Kenneth Ford, Executive Director of Inner Life
24 Ministries. I just want to thank you all for your
25 time, for coming out this evening. When I heard

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1 about the plight of the Black Archives, I searched
2 -- you just met my program administrator, Peggy. We
3 talked -- we were thinking about what can we do to
4 participate, to help do what we can do. I remember
5 Horace very well. Years ago I was working with the
6 Jazz -- back then we called it the Jazz Heritage
7 Revitalization Project. And we were all meeting
8 around in this area, and Horace was always one of
9 those people that was with that. And I remember
10 Horace coming on and like Ajamu said, if you knew
11 Horace, you knew Horace. I mean, he had a drive and
12 a passion about what he was doing. And sometimes he
13 was just -- you say, "Man, I really don't want to
14 hear it right now." But he would bring it to you
15 anyway. And so as I put together Inner Life
16 Ministries, I look at how some of the things that I
17 learned from Horace has helped me put Inner Life
18 Ministries together. Some of the drive, the passion
19 and the tenacity that he demonstrated and manifested
20 in my life. I want to utilize that to help keep the

21 archives alive and vibrant.

22 So you just met my program administrator.

23 She comes from a very high level corporate

24 background. I want to offer to lend her services to

25 the corporate or the board, the board of directors

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1 or staff leadership, whatever you need. She is very

2 capable. Very astute in everything. And not to

3 minimize the people that we have here in Kansas

4 City. We have some very, very qualified people here

5 in Kansas City. But she brings some unique talents

6 to the table. It is there for you if you like to

7 have it. Thank you very much.

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Michelle Freeman

9 then Gwendolyn Grant, President and C.E.O. of the

10 Urban League of Greater Kansas City. Gwendolyn

11 Grant come on up.

12 MS. GWENDOLYN GRANT: Good evening. This

13 is such an important occasion on behalf of the

14 African American community and our history and our

15 heritage. And I just would like to echo what many

16 of my colleagues have said previously, that it is

17 important that we maintain and sustain our

18 heritage. And to my brother over here, Leon Nixon,

19 who said that my soul looks back in wonder at how I

20 got older. We can't look forward without

21 understanding our history that is behind us. I

22 firmly believe that what is missing in the
23 character, development and the integrity of our
24 young people is their lack of knowledge of our
25 history.

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1 Also our legacy continues. The Urban
2 League of Greater Kansas City is 86 years old. We
3 have a rich history that we would love to have
4 archived in the Black Archives. We have maintained
5 our history. It has been archived and cataloged by
6 the State Historical Society and is currently housed
7 in our organization. But it should be housed in the
8 Black Archives so that everybody in Kansas City can
9 have access to it.

10 Further, we have in this audience people
11 who have contributed to the important legacy of
12 Kansas City. African Americans who helped to build
13 and shape the framework of this great city, and we
14 should be collecting their history while they are
15 living. The oral histories and the documents that
16 they have in their homes should be stored at the
17 Black Archives. We do know this truly was a legacy
18 that was set here for us. So I am here tonight, I
19 pledge the support of the Urban League of Greater
20 Kansas City. We too were at the table early on to
21 try to keep this problem from happening. As soon as
22 we heard, we stepped up and offered our support

23 quietly, not trying to get anybody's attention,
24 just to do what needed to be done. We promise to
25 continue to do that, not only with our collective

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1 human resources and volunteer time. We plan to also
2 put a little money where our mouth is.

3 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Michelle
4 Finegan. Tobett Mura and then Ms. Mel Gibbons.
5 Tobett Mura? Mel Gibbons. Larry Hackman. Greta
6 Hall and then Lewis Harris.

7 MR. LARRY HACKMAN: Good evening. I
8 appreciate the opportunity to speak here. And I
9 hope my comments will be useful. I certainly intend
10 them to be. My name is Larry Hackman, I am a
11 Missouri native. I live in Kansas City. I retired
12 several years ago as the director of the Truman
13 Presidential Museum and Library. From 1981 to '95 I
14 was the state archivist in New York. And from '75
15 to '81 the First Director of the Historical Records
16 Grant Program of the granting agency in Washington
17 with the longest name and the least money, the
18 National Historical Publications and Records
19 Commission.

20 It was at NHPRC that I met Horace Peterson
21 when he came to Washington in the 1970's seeking
22 grant funds to help develop the Black Archives. My
23 recollection, though I have not gone back and

24 reexamined commission files from those days, is that
25 we did not encourage him to apply for grants, grant

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1 funds at that time, because it did not appear then
2 there was a good prospect that the Black Archives
3 could obtain the reliable ongoing resources needed
4 to sustain a sound archives. So here we are in 2006
5 asking the same questions again. From all I have
6 heard, certainly confirm this evening that Mr.
7 Peterson was passionate, dedicated, energetic and
8 certainly charismatic. But the issue now is how to
9 ensure the future accessibility and sound
10 management. And equally important, and I stress
11 equally important the collection and good treatment
12 of additional documentation as our last speaker
13 emphasized. Additional documentation from the
14 important history of black community in Kansas City
15 and nearby regions.

16 I would like to share just a few sobering
17 thoughts as the Black Archives is being reconsidered
18 as we move forward. My comments reflect what I
19 think is long experience with archival programs,
20 that long experience with archival programs across
21 the nation has taught me about what makes a viable
22 archives. First, whatever organization or perhaps
23 we are an organization, has physical and/or legal
24 custody of these collections, we must all be fully

25 conscious of the obligations and the burdens that go

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1 with accepting responsibility for archives. The
2 basic point really is a simple one. Archives by
3 definition are records that have enduring value. To
4 accept responsibility for archives implies managing
5 them properly, making them readily accessible, and
6 ensuring the survivability of the documents or the
7 information in them in some cases. Not just for
8 next year, or for the next decade, or so long as
9 funds are flowing readily and an enthusiastic board
10 is on hand, but for the very, very, very long term.
11 It is not a responsibility of the board of directors
12 or other servants for future generations ever should
13 treat as appropriate a short term fix.

14 Second, and closer related, it is
15 important for us to be aware of the core functions
16 that need to be applied to the archives over time,
17 and to come to terms with the fact that each of
18 these functions requires specialized knowledge and
19 experience. An archives needs first a clear settled
20 discipline collecting policy. Then it needs
21 appraisal procedures to guide its formal assessment
22 of documents that it considers, which ones to take
23 from the Urban League or whatever organization. And
24 it meets succession issues, so that the provenance
25 of the records is understood. The ownership and the

1 other rights of the materials are settled, and
2 preliminary description of the records is done at
3 the outset, to help establish both internal controls
4 for security purposes and as a baseline for future
5 work.

6 Archivists then arrange and describe its
7 items, using archival principles and standards.
8 Here it is especially important for us all to
9 understand the descriptive standards for archives
10 that have been created since Horace Peterson created
11 the Black Archives in the 1970's. Including
12 standards that support compatibility with other
13 archives and facilitate access.

14 Archives also demand an informed and
15 practical approach to preservation of documents in
16 the immediate and near term demands against
17 long-term considerations. Access policies and
18 reference procedures for the facility to use, which
19 is, after all, the desired outcome of all of this
20 work that we are talking about doing together. Then
21 need to reflect all the other steps I described.
22 Many of the archival methods that I have mentioned
23 are not only used by librarians for publications, or
24 by museum curators for artifacts. Archival
25 administration is a practice that needs to be

1 applied by knowledgeable and experienced
2 professionals.

3 My third point concerns the kind of
4 program which might be appropriate for the archival
5 holdings at the Black Archives. It ought to have a
6 mission that is highly consistent with the
7 administration, and again I feel so strongly the
8 future expansion of some of the kinds of materials
9 sought in the past by the Black Archives. It ought
10 to be a repository to carry out those core functions
11 that I noted. It ought to have a sound and reliable
12 ongoing source of resources for its operations. One
13 that is not highly susceptible to vagaries of local
14 support. In all due respect, grants are not an
15 ongoing reliable source of support. You need, as
16 one of your speakers who has been mowing the lawn
17 and fixing the leaks said, you need first a
18 foundation and you need that foundation more than
19 you need foundation X, Y or Z at this point.

20 It would be a real loss of future research
21 into the education of our children and their
22 children and their children, especially in Kansas
23 City, if our community cannot find a way to provide
24 for the future accessibility of the collections held
25 by the Black Archives and their expansion. Doing so

1 will be the best memorial that we can provide Horace
2 Peterson and the way to fulfill a major part of his
3 original vision. Thank you very much.

4 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Greta Hall and
5 Lewis Harris and Adrian Ausler.

6 MS. GRETA HALL: Let us pray. God of our
7 weary years. God of our silent tears. Thou who has
8 brought us thus far on the way. Thou who has by Thy
9 might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the
10 path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places,
11 our God, where we met thee; lest our hearts, drunk
12 with the wine -- w-i-n-e and w-h-i-n-e -- of the
13 world we forget thee. Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
14 may we forever stand, true to our God, true to our
15 native land.

16 I am Greta Hall. I have been a third
17 district resident all my life. I am a life member
18 of Delta Sigma Theta and the NAACP. And I am the
19 former youth director for the Jamison Memorial
20 Temple CME Church, which was formerly located around
21 the corner at what is now the Holy Ghost New
22 Testament Church. I took a group of youth to the
23 archives, I think it was a very, very wonderful
24 experience. It is important, as so many have said
25 before, that we keep this Black Archive alive. It

1 was Horace Peterson's life work and we cannot let it
2 go during our watch over some paperwork. Accounting
3 paperwork and money. So, with God's help we can
4 work this out. Utilizing the funds and principles
5 of unity, self-determination, collected work and
6 responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose,
7 creativity and faith, we will accomplish our
8 mission. Thank you.

9 MS. DEBORAH HALL: Good evening. My name
10 is Deborah Hall, and I have been a volunteer for the
11 Black Archives for over the past ten years. And
12 what I would like to just ask is, Mr. Nixon, that
13 you leave the Black Archives in this community. We
14 have heard a lot tonight about the Black Archives,
15 about Horace Peterson and the compassion that runs
16 in this community. And it is a beautiful thing,
17 whether this house is full, but just having the
18 people that are here to express or to show your
19 concern for something that is so vital to this
20 community. Not just this community here in Kansas
21 City, but for the entire State of Missouri. The
22 resources that sit on 20th and Vine you just -- it
23 is just amazing. I talked to a young man the other
24 night, he said he had never been to the archives.
25 My fault. He is a friend. I don't know why.

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1 But on behalf of the volunteers, these are

2 the people that come out, that work from sun-up to
3 sun-down and then some. These are the people that
4 have kept the Black Archives afloat. We see now
5 that there is a lot of money out there, but
6 sometimes you can't find money when you are looking
7 for it. But we just thank God for the volunteers
8 that have come. Volunteering is very worthwhile and
9 rewarding and it is very enriching. I ask myself,
10 what can I do to make a change? And I had the
11 opportunity to volunteer. I have done a little bit
12 of everything. And I am sure there is a lot of
13 volunteers out there that can relate. But I would
14 just like to ask, as far as we have heard about the
15 plan. But there is a question that we all must ask
16 when we are going to join a board. But you must
17 have the right people to ask the question. You must
18 have a plan put together. And you must have the
19 right support when you need it. So this is what I
20 would ask of our community. We have the support. I
21 have heard funds that I hadn't heard about. So I am
22 just asking that we stay together and make this
23 work.

24 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Lewis Harris
25 followed by Councilwoman Sandra McFadden.

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1 Councilwoman you are up. You traveled the furthest
2 of anyone to be here. I guarantee that.

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COUNCILWOMAN SAUNDRA MCFADDEN-WEAVER:

Good evening. First of all, as we give the glory and praise to God, whom I know is present and has been since before this meeting started and has been a sustaining power of everything that we talk about. I give honor to this esteemed Attorney General, and to all of our elected officials that are present this evening. And to each and every person that came with their heart, their commitment and creative ideas to see that we revealed what we allowed to leave.

There is nothing dead about Black Archives. I'm sure somebody is saying, why would she come in here dressed like that at a time like this? But because I am committed to the Black Archives, I am not supposed to fly three hours without a layover. Today I have flown 15 hours, because I am just returning from Ghana, where there are people with no conveniences, living in districts like the 3rd who are still living in mud huts by choice because grandmother's story is still on the wall in the mud.

It is by no coincidence that this meeting

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got switched around and fate worked and the supernatural powers of heritage and unity of love and positive thinking allow us to experience the

4 life-changing things that I have for the past three
5 weeks and then get here right now. Because I want
6 you to understand something. If there has ever been
7 commitment in my heart to see to it that the rich
8 heritage of our people, of this community and of
9 this city will not just just exist somewhere in
10 files, in a building with a lock on it, and hope and
11 pray to preserve it and maintain it and secure it.
12 But where we will intentionally see to it that funds
13 will be available to make it what it should be, to
14 love it like it ought to be, to nurture it and to
15 nourish it like it should be, and to treat it like
16 it is somebody's child, because it is. It is our
17 baby. It is our baby.

18 I think that when we talk about black
19 heritage -- and if I may, I won't labor. But when
20 we talk about black heritage, and I have heard, and
21 I appreciate everyone coming out tonight. And I
22 have been listening while I was racing to try to get
23 here, to all of the wonderful things that have been
24 said. But I told a dear friend when I was coming
25 across the lobby tonight, I was listening and I am

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1 going to hold you to it. One thing that bothers me
2 is when we come together and we say, "I didn't
3 know." Because you know what, it is time for us to
4 be responsible and step up to the plate of quit

5 lying. We knew. We knew that gas bill needed to be
6 paid. We knew that. We knew the light bill was
7 steadily going up as long as there was a light
8 shining. And we knew that people were working
9 without being paid. And we knew that it was our
10 heritage in that building. We knew it ever since
11 the door opened. We know it now. And whether we
12 want to stand here and accept it or not, I want to
13 say I'm sorry. Not because it is my fault, but
14 because it is our fault. The village did it. The
15 village, we did it. And it is not going to sound
16 good in the morning. It is not going to sound good
17 tonight. And while you are chewing on that good
18 barbecue and that cheeseburger when you have a
19 gossip meeting after you leave here, whenever you
20 get through, I am telling the truth about it. We
21 knew. And if we didn't know, it is our fault that
22 we didn't care enough to watch it.

23 In the 60's we put on our attire, the
24 70's we wore our attire and now we have moved up to
25 kentate. But the reason the revolution was not

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1 televised is because we didn't pay for the air
2 time. That's why. I offered. Now I am going to
3 beg.

4 I am appreciative, Mr. Attorney General,
5 for you to restore us to the level that we have been

6 restored. And I am committing to you that this
7 community and this interim board, and this city
8 government -- if I don't legislate nothing else on
9 the floor, I just want you to know that we are going
10 to hold it up until we get this right. And I expect
11 you to come and help me hold it up. Everything
12 needs to stop until we make sure that we get certain
13 things corrected.

14 Now let me help you understand something.
15 Politics and evidence and a refusal to work together
16 got us to where we are. Don't talk about united
17 front if you are not united within, because if you
18 just unite the outside of the building and leave the
19 inside decaying, there is still a cancer and it is
20 going to die. We cannot allow terminal mentality
21 and bureaucracy to leave us out.

22 And I am not talking about gifts, I am
23 talking about how do we ever even get to the place
24 that we expect an entity, a museum, no other place
25 in America, are museums expected to be

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1 self-supporting until we get to Kansas City about
2 the Black Archives. I can't find another museum
3 that is expected to be self-supporting until I get
4 to our Black Archives. We need to stop. You know
5 how it got that way? We did it. We did it. Me and
6 you, and you, and you, and you and everybody. We

7 did it. We allowed policy to be written that would
8 write us off, and then we expected the volunteer
9 army to care about all of our heritage enough to
10 sustain it. And I want to commend and express my
11 appreciation to everybody that did. And especially
12 to those that died doing it. And the work has to
13 start now. The conversation and the gossip has been
14 had. So I hope that when we wake up in the morning,
15 we won't hear any more of the outlandish lies
16 murmuring through the community, because they have
17 been cleared up. The artifacts are still there,
18 every one of them. Can I get another Amen? Is that
19 correct, sir? Is that what you found?

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: So far. I have
21 not found anything gone.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MCFADDEN-WEAVER: Did you
23 look?

24 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Yes, ma'am.

25 COUNCILWOMAN MCFADDEN-WEAVER: You came.

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1 I am so happy. I know you don't want to say it too
2 loud, Mr. Attorney General, but you know what, I
3 felt so good, I was so appreciative when you came
4 here. He cared enough to come himself. Not just
5 today, but several weeks ago when it was time to
6 investigate. To put the lies to rest and so that
7 from his professional desk and his authority he

8 could look fairly at the situation. So let us not
9 spit venom on our own heritage, and let us not blame
10 our brothers and sisters for what we ourselves have
11 done. And let us not kick across racial lines and
12 say "They did it." We did it. And when we begin to
13 accept our problem, is when we start healing from
14 our addiction of excuses. That is point number one.

15 Point Number 2, is that if every single
16 body and every single organization comes together
17 with the energies that it has to make something
18 right that has been wronged, it will make it, and it
19 will shine across this country and across the
20 world. Because you know what, somebody's
21 grandmother's story, and somebody's great
22 grandfather's story is still packed up and waiting
23 for us to display it in our brand new facility that
24 we intend to open up, that we intend to stay -- I
25 love the design, whenever you see it, it will be

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1 unbelievable, because we have nothing like it in
2 America. And it will be right here in Kansas City
3 in the 3rd District as we planned. Because this is
4 our home and it is our heritage.

5 When we come together like this, and we
6 come to support each other like this, not to throw
7 daggers, not to point fingers, not to say who isn't
8 and who is, but to say "Let's we do it" and make a

9 "we" proposition. And those that can only do a
10 little bit will make their little bit become much.
11 And those that can do a lot, will make their lot
12 become greater. And when all of us work together
13 and give together, because it does cost money to
14 maintain and to grow. And it takes education. And
15 it takes constant training. You know, we should
16 have archivist training available just like every
17 other museum has for its staff, so that they can go
18 on retreats. Our staff at the Black Archives ought
19 to be going to retreats every other year and going
20 to conventions every other year, and learning all
21 about how we keep things and preserve things by
22 state of the art like everybody else. It doesn't
23 mean we have to fly somebody in from all over the
24 country to become that. Make it from home and
25 develop it here and preserve it from the commitment

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1 that we have, because we love where we are.

2 If you love where you are, and you love
3 Kansas City and you believe in what we are doing,
4 then your time tonight is well spent. But anybody
5 that doesn't really believe tonight, you are wasting
6 your time tonight, because those of us that do
7 believe are going to pull and push and mold and pray
8 until we get where we are supposed to be. But faith
9 without works is dead. It is dead. I am hoping

10 that -- in fact, I am going to be sure that I am
11 outside in the lobby at the close of this meeting,
12 because I hope people will be making pledges
13 tonight. Not speeches, but pledges. You know if
14 one family can't afford but five dollars a month, if
15 a thousand families give five dollars a month, that
16 will be \$5,000 a month. And before you know it, it
17 will be \$500,000 a month. It won't take -- it won't
18 hurt anybody, it will just be enough to do what
19 needs to be done. But if all of us will take time
20 to do the little bit that we can, it would be
21 greatly appreciated.

22 And if we unite all of our forces
23 together, all of our organizations together and our
24 entire community together, let us understand that
25 the people out front are the one that will bear the

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1 heat and the burden and the pain of change. So
2 rather than to talk about them, please talk with us,
3 and help us do what we need to do. Because guess
4 what, thanks be to God, there is no coffin and it
5 shall never be nailed shut. Please help us continue
6 this heritage and make it right. A little paint, a
7 little cleaning up and a little cutting will go a
8 long way. But a little money will sustain that the
9 cleaning and the cutting and the paint will never go
10 undone. Thank you so much.

11 Please know that I am here. And I will
12 continue to be here. We're going to figure out what
13 we need to do. And we will continue to communicate
14 with your office, sir, so that under your advisement
15 and under our policies, and in a correct timely
16 manner in which we shall file every report. The
17 interim board of this community will bring the Black
18 Archives to a place of healing. Thank you so very
19 much.

20 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Mayor Pro Tem
21 Alvin Brooks is here. Also I want to try to
22 recognize someone who does not have time to speak,
23 but is former senator and my good friend Mary Bland,
24 as well as Michael Brown. Alvin Brooks.

25 MR. BROOKS: I will yield. I think there

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1 are some young people that have been here a long
2 time. I will yield to them. I can wait.

3 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: All right.
4 Adrian Ausler.

5 KEVIN: How are you all doing today? My
6 name is Kevin.

7 MR. ADRIAN AUSLER: My name is Adrian
8 Ausler.

9 KEVIN: We came here tonight, you know
10 what I am saying. There is only five youth here.
11 Where are the rest of us at? That's what we need.

12 That's what we need help with. We need to build a
13 body of Christ to get through to the youth. If we
14 can get to the youth, it can start over again. I
15 don't know, everything you all have been up here
16 talking about, to be honest, I never heard of it.
17 And why because of that? Nobody ever taught me.
18 That's what people are saying tonight. Nobody talk
19 to you. And if we don't know nothing, how can we
20 teach the generation under us. How can we build a
21 body of Christ and not get nothing?

22 You all talk about how the community is
23 not behind you all. You can't get the community
24 behind you all with just the older folks. The
25 youth, that's who is out here right now. That is

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1 the problem, the youth. That's what is killing each
2 other. We kill each other out here. When we get
3 the youth together, it is good. So that's what we
4 need to try to do. And we can start building stuff
5 for the youth to do, you know what I am saying,
6 that's positive, we can get through a lot better.
7 We can get through a lot of stuff.

8 We talk about the foundation. We talk
9 about the money. The youth can help. We can help.
10 Talk about cleaning up. We can help. How do we
11 know to come to 23rd and Vine to clean up something
12 when we don't hear about it. How do we know about

13 black history in Kansas City, Missouri right here on
14 Vine Street if we don't know about it. If you don't
15 know about something, up until a certain extent, you
16 are not going to respect it. All we are doing right
17 now, we are not respecting it. That's why I am
18 trying to get a body of Christ together with
19 everybody. We can start right here in this room
20 and move it out. We are good. We are good.

21 MR. ADRIAN AUSLER: You know, talking
22 about that body of Christ. The way that Kevin
23 proposed we do that is by natural talents. What
24 happens a lot of times, I see a lot of people on the
25 streets and they have really good talents, really

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1 natural talents and natural talents come from God.
2 And those same natural talents are what we need for
3 the archives to be built. Like Langston Hughes and
4 his court paintings. I hear people talk about,
5 there are just instances like Langston Hughes, what
6 we need to use is when we have the archives as a
7 foundation, and then build up on that with the
8 people in the communities. So what Langston Hughes
9 has that, but you have that in you too. And you
10 show that person how to have that in them and you
11 bring them together. Because what he says is that
12 when we come together, it is that body of Christ.

13 Like if we have all -- like if the hand is

14 so strong, like if it is so strong individually, how
15 much stronger is it if we are together, if we have
16 all of these archivists that are together. We have
17 all these people. There are so many things that can
18 be accomplished. And again, I just want to keep on
19 saying it, but I just want to reiterate, that
20 nothing can happen without us building a body of
21 Christ. Like we talk about the business and about
22 the archives and about like objects. But those
23 objects are really absolute, because we are the
24 history.

25 And if you look at me, you don't even

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1 recognize that I am black history. I need to
2 recognize that for myself. And what happens is when
3 we first got here, a lot of people were getting up
4 there and they were saying that they were surprised
5 that they could speak. But see, we asked if we
6 could speak but we were told no. And the reason for
7 that, in my mind, is because I don't have no money.
8 I don't have -- I am not a politician and something
9 like that. I have inside of me Jesus, which is more
10 than any of us thinks. And knowing that I have
11 Jesus, people should recognize that. You should
12 expose that.

13 And then lastly, I just want to leave you
14 all with a poem. These are face words, but it is

15 not for your face, it is for your mind. It goes,
16 "Come back home my well flowered child. None of us
17 are like you, so we really need you around. You are
18 the most exotic of all the flowers in the grass.
19 But you want to be in that soil so you are willing
20 to pass, of any opportunity that will make you grow
21 tall, because if you can't have any of that for you,
22 then you won't try at all. These days come in handy
23 any time we get weak, but my well flowered child,
24 you made us sit down and think that we can be
25 amazing and do things we know we can't do. But I

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1 promise you we will be nothing if we can't do them
2 with you." Let's all do that together.

3 KEVIN: I also want to say. It is
4 history. We as the black, the white community, we
5 make history every single minute. History is not
6 just from 1990, it is in 2006 now. If we can get
7 together. They got black kids, white kids. They
8 got all different races out here. They are
9 talented. If we can get together in the museum,
10 that's our foundation right there. The community.
11 If you all can have community by that, we are good.
12 That's all I want to say.

13 MR. EREK RAMBO: My name is Erek Rambo. I
14 am Director of Youth Development Activities at the
15 Full Employment Council. Earlier you guys started

16 talking about the Black Archives and the vision that
17 was perceived to be as the future went on. A lot of
18 times we talk about the youth. A lot of times we
19 haven't included our youth. I was fortunate to have
20 a mom who was in the civil rights movement. I was
21 fortunate to have my teach who went to Sumner
22 Academy, the first all black school west of the
23 Mississippi in St. Louis. I was fortunate to have
24 that stuff embedded in me. But like if you haven't
25 talked to your children -- and we have these kids

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1 dying all the time. You know why they are dying?
2 Because they don't know who they are. They don't
3 understand that they are not -- (applause). They
4 don't understand their history. No one has told
5 them how valuable they are. If you understand where
6 you come from and what you have done, and that you
7 have living legends walking around here every day.

8 Mr. Brooks, for example, got his start
9 when they didn't want to honor Martin Luther King
10 and wouldn't let Kansas City's kids out of school.
11 They left Central, they left Lincoln, they walked
12 out of City Hall and started protesting. Mr.
13 Brooks, they called him up and said the kids are
14 down here tripping. They called him up and he came
15 and got the buses and took them all over here to
16 23rd, I believe. 23rd and Benton. It used to be a

17 bowling alley and everything. The kids had a good
18 time. Unfortunately they got tear gassed in that
19 facility. But see the kids know this stuff. If
20 they understand these kids are powerful, these kids
21 are talented. The thing is, it hasn't been taught.
22 No one has taught it. If everybody here would have
23 brought one child with them, we would not have just
24 100 people here, we would have 200 people here.

25 All we are saying, go tell them kids who

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1 they are, where they come from and what they are
2 about. Like I said, they are not pimps, they are
3 not players, they are not hustlers. We are very
4 smart, we are very intelligent. We built this
5 country on free labor. Let these kids know that you
6 are a living legend. When you go down here on 18th
7 and Vine, you are walking on history.

8 Let them know that when they pass 27th
9 Street, when they looked out it used to be all white
10 schools. Let them know who they are and where they
11 come from. If they know where they come from,
12 they'll know who they are and be more choosing of
13 the things that they do. So I believe in our kids.
14 I don't have a lot of money. I can't give you a lot
15 of money. But what I can do, I am in contact with
16 over 1200 youth in this community. We do all types
17 of community service projects. Community service

18 out here. We go out on the Paseo. So any time you
19 need, Representative Brooks you know, call me. I
20 will get the kids out here. I am a veteran of
21 CMSU. We will get them out here. Don't be afraid
22 of your kids. Love your kids. Let them know who
23 they are. And they will love you back and they will
24 take care of this community. There won't be any
25 work for you all, because they will do it, just to

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1 make you happy. My name is Erek Rambo and I approve
2 this message.

3 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Dr. Linwood
4 Tauheed. In order to try to make sure that we keep
5 things moving and we make sure we have all the right
6 names and all the right folks who will be
7 testifying. Assistant Attorney General Lynn Matlose
8 is going to be down here. Those that are on the
9 list and continue to want to make their statements.
10 She is going to try to order that so we keep things
11 going in a rational way. I am stunned by our
12 organization already. Everyone has been
13 unbelievably helpful. I cannot tell you from my
14 chair how moving it has been to be hear this this
15 evening. The unanimity of force and voice. That
16 being said.

17 MR. LINWOOD TAUHEED: Thank you. Good
18 evening. It is very heartwarming and heartening to

19 see all of you come out for concern for an
20 institution in our community. I am Linwood
21 Tauheed. I am Professor of Economics at the
22 University of Missouri Kansas City and Professor of
23 Black Studies. From that vantage point, I teach a
24 course in the African American Political Economy.
25 And one of the things that I do in my class is

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1 always challenge my students to think. And I try to
2 do that by trying to challenge those things that we
3 take for granted. Those things that we say that we
4 think are true, but may not be true. So one of the
5 things I ask is, there is a statement out here that
6 we say that, if we don't value our history, no one
7 else will. Well, we say that, but let's think about
8 it.

9 Is it true, for example, that Blues as a
10 musical form, which emerged out of our community and
11 out of our history, out of our pain and suffering,
12 but also out of our resistance to that pain and
13 suffering, was undervalued by us and therefore
14 undervalued by everyone else. Is that true? No, it
15 is not. We undervalue our history, our music,
16 Blues. But there were those who saw value in it.
17 As an economist, I am very keen of what has economic
18 value.

19 And it is not true that if we don't see

20 the economic value in our things, that others
21 don't. So we find that even though Blues came from
22 us, we don't control that industry, because others
23 have seen that there is a value in it and they have
24 taken it and they have run. The same as with jazz.
25 Okay. We could go on and on.

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1 So it is not true that if we don't value
2 our history that no one else will. Sometimes it is
3 true that if we don't value our history others will
4 see the value in it and take it from us. So it is
5 with the Black Archives. I am not a native from
6 Kansas City. I moved here in 1975. So I have been
7 here a long time. And many of you, many of your
8 faces I knew from pictures in the Black Archives
9 before I knew you. Because much of you, many of you
10 who are natives, who have lived that history that is
11 in that collection, there are pictures of you at
12 various stages in this community. So I knew many of
13 you before I knew you personally, and maybe see you
14 now. So there is a value in that.

15 And I ask my students, what is the value
16 of the past? What do we do with that? What point
17 is it? And one of the things that we always know
18 that we can do with the past, is that we can use it
19 as a gauge of where we are going. Right? If we
20 know our past, if we have some vision, we should

21 know where we are going. So I ask this question.
22 Or I would like to make this statement. The
23 condition of the Black Archives is in many ways
24 symptomatic of the condition of our community. It
25 is full of promise and potential. It emerges out of

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1 our collective genius. It carries our nostalgic
2 passion, but is sorely neglected, undervalued,
3 ignored, underfunded and in disrepair.

4 Some of us may say that we should not air
5 our dirty laundry in public. In fact, I want to
6 commend the Attorney General for holding this forum,
7 because that attitude is a mistake. It is the same
8 attitude that causes many of us to believe that we
9 should not snitch on perpetrators of crime in our
10 community. Confronting the hard problems
11 confronting our community. They go on and on and
12 on, because we want to sweep them under the rug
13 rather than dealing with them. Oh, yes, we will sit
14 for hours while public figures and other celebrities
15 discuss the state of Black America on national T.V.
16 But in discussions of our more local specific
17 issues, we shrink from the light of day, perhaps
18 hoping that none of our friends, family members or
19 acquaintances will be found lacking in their
20 diligence. That attitude must stop.

21 And in that, we need those who are willing

22 to present the hard facts to us. Those who are
23 willing to call it as it is. Who are willing to
24 call on us to realize our potential, and not just
25 revel in our past accomplishments. So I want to

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1 commend those who in fact brought the attention,
2 brought the issue of the Black Archives to the
3 attention of the Attorney General. Because he
4 wasn't just looking out there waiting for an
5 opportunity. The Black Archives has been
6 undervalued and in disrepair for a long time. And
7 there are some who ignored it, but there are some
8 who did not. Who took it as their responsibility to
9 make sure that what is of value to us, stays of
10 value. And realizing that the Attorney General had
11 a fiduciary responsibility over non-profits to make
12 that happen, if community could not make that
13 happen. Called on him to do so. So he is doing his
14 job and I commend that. Because sometimes it is
15 difficult for politicians to come in our community
16 and show us our faults. We are going to blame them
17 instead of the real causes of our problems.

18 And so the Black Archives -- this last
19 thing. The Black Archives represents the link from
20 our past to our future. Should that link disappear,
21 we will disappear. Perhaps not physically, but
22 certainly spiritually. And if we lose our vision of

23 where we have come from, of the friends and families
24 that have given us joy, of the work that has nurtured
25 our bodies, the churches and mosques that sustain

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1 our spirit. In short, to restate a theme, of the
2 bridges that got us over, we will lose our vision of
3 where we are going, and without vision, the people
4 will perish.

5 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Mr. Richard
6 Tolbert. Do you want to speak? Followed by Mr.
7 Brian Mosby.

8 MR. RICHARD TOLBERT: Thank you, Mr.
9 Nixon. I had forgotten that I had signed up for the
10 original plan. I hadn't really planned to get up
11 tonight, because the thing I was concerned about
12 has happened. Prior to these hearings, and when we
13 discovered the problems of the Black Archives, it
14 was also rumored in the community that there was a
15 lack of support for the Black Archives in the
16 community, and I think that misconception has been
17 cleared up tonight. I am happy to hear that a board
18 is back in place. But I would appeal to Anthony and
19 Saundra and the other members of the board to help
20 the community understand, first of all, what went
21 wrong in the past, and help us to reassure us that
22 safeguards are going to be put in place so that it
23 won't happen again in the future. And then I think

24 if those things are done, there will be no problem
25 getting money support, volunteer support and other

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1 support for our community. Thank you.

2 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Brian Mosby.

3 MR. BRIAN MOSBY: Good evening to
4 everyone. I am going to be very brief. I
5 appreciate today has been a very long day for most
6 of us. I am Brian Mosby, President of the Midwest
7 Afro-American Genealogical Interest Coalition.
8 Better known locally and nationally as MAGIC.

9 MAGIC wished to express our opinion and
10 offer a recommendation to the state Attorney
11 General's Office and our local community regarding
12 the future of the Black Archives of Mid-America. We
13 wish to express our comments and opinions in five
14 points.

15 Point one, MAGIC recommends that the Black
16 Archives remain in the 18th Historic District and
17 exist in conjunction with the American Jazz Museum
18 and Negro Leagues Museum as a part of the African
19 American experience.

20 Point two, MAGIC believes it will be a
21 tragedy for the Black Archives collection to be
22 distributed among several locations.

23 Point three, if the Black Archives must be
24 relocated, perhaps Lincoln University could take

25 over the collection. They will be in a good

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1 position to archive the collection. Again, MAGIC
2 recommends the Black Archives remain in this area,
3 but we also support the idea of a black organization
4 overseeing the collection.

5 Point four, we believe a major problem
6 with the Black Archives has been that it has not
7 been accessible to the community at large. There
8 may be a number of reasons for this. Deterioration
9 of materials, missing objects, lack of staff, et
10 cetera.

11 We believe one of the solutions that could
12 be implemented is to make the Black Archives
13 accessible to the public through exhibits and our
14 research hours. Reestablishing a good community
15 rapport is significant for future donations to the
16 archives.

17 Finally point five. MAGIC is an
18 organization which specializes in the collection and
19 preservation of African American genealogy and
20 family history. We are a 501c(3) not-for-profit
21 organization. MAGIC wishes to offer our volunteer
22 services as a partnership with the Black Archives.

23 In addition, if acceptable, MAGIC wishes
24 to offer a member of our organization to serve on
25 the Black Archives Board of Trustees. We could

1 assist in investigating whether there are funds
2 available from the city, state or other
3 organizations to jump start the Black Archives.

4 MAGIC wishes to thank the Attorney
5 General's Office for the opportunity to present this
6 testimony. Thank you very much.

7 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Mr. David
8 Jackson. Ms. Evelyn Taylor.

9 MR. DAVID JACKSON: Good evening for those
10 of you who remain. My name is David Jackson and I
11 represent the volunteers, the staff and the Board of
12 Directors for the Jackson County Historical
13 Society. And I am very humbled by the testimony
14 that I have heard tonight.

15 Our organization is more than 60 years
16 old. And our organization also has had its ups and
17 downs. But you can learn from history, I am here to
18 say, and there is an extreme interest in local
19 history. I am the veteran archivist for the
20 Historical Society. And I say veteran, because I am
21 in the trenches every day, answering about 4500
22 requests that come to us annually, and among those
23 requests is an incredible interest in black history.

24 And so I am here to tell you tonight that
25 we need the Black Archives in this community. We

1 cannot answer requests that come from across the
2 globe alone. In the six years that I have been with
3 the Historical Society, it has been kind of sad that
4 I have not been able to rely on the Black Archives.
5 So I am very happy about the energy that is here
6 tonight.

7 Mrs. Peterson, I never had the honor to
8 meet your husband, but I believe that he is here
9 tonight. I feel that. And the Historical Society
10 is very much interested in helping any effort that
11 will help to preserve and promote and make available
12 once again the great collections that the Black
13 Archives has assembled. So I thank you very much
14 for your time.

15 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Ms. Evelyn Taylor
16 followed by Ms. Deborah Mix.

17 MS. EVELYN TAYLOR: Good evening. To Mrs.
18 Peterson, to the Attorney General and to my brothers
19 and sisters, I would like to say that the statement
20 that I have prepared has kind of -- some of the
21 questions have been answered. And I am here this
22 evening as the Vice President of the Noble
23 Neighborhood Association. And on behalf of the
24 association, and the Skylight Missionary Baptist
25 Church, we are here today to say that we are shocked

1 by the status of the Black Archives. And I know
2 that some folks have mentioned that, you know, we
3 should have known this in the community. But
4 sometimes when you have a community that basically
5 keeps lots of things under wraps and just deals with
6 a certain group of people, lots of times that
7 communication breaks down. And so that's why lots
8 of times people don't hear things. I think we have
9 to work on that communication, as far as connecting
10 in the community, not just with certain people, but
11 with the community. Okay.

12 We believe that -- we came because there
13 was questions that we needed to have answered, and I
14 believe that lots of questions have been answered.
15 We came here under the impression that there was not
16 a board. As a matter of fact, we checked with the
17 Attorney General's Office and was told that there
18 wasn't a list or there wasn't any type of board at
19 that time, and since then they have formed a board.

20 I personally remember when Horace
21 Peterson, the founder of the Black Archives, was
22 putting up such a strong fight to get the Black
23 Archives facility moved to where the Negro Baseball
24 Museum stands now, and then he met his untimely
25 death. So he did put that information in the

1 newspaper. I will tell you where I got my

2 information. If you need to go back and look at
3 copies, you can do so.

4 We are hearing that the Black Archives
5 board has not been seeing eye to eye, but we are
6 stating that even with confusion, when confusion is
7 going on with boards, we still could have -- we feel
8 that they could have still worked on recertifying
9 way back when, because they would know how important
10 it was to keep the archives. We believe that that
11 should have been priority. If a person didn't know
12 better, and this was the discussion, persons or
13 persons would think, maybe some type of conspiracy
14 tactic was taking place to shut down the archives,
15 based on how everything was flowing at the time.

16 We also didn't understand why the assets
17 had to be distributed if the recertification didn't
18 take place, unless there was a debt that was owed.
19 We didn't have a clear understanding of that.

20 The Noble Neighborhood Association and the
21 Skylight Baptist Church will do everything in its
22 power to make sure that this valuable African
23 American history will remain in our community for
24 our children and great grandchildren, to learn more
25 about their history. Every culture, every race of

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1 people wants to preserve their own history at all
2 costs. We have some recommendations that we believe

3 would be important to keep the archives functioning,
4 and I would be more than happy to meet with whoever
5 I need to meet with to make that happen. Thank you.

6 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Ms. Deborah Mix.
7 Tonya Price.

8 MS. TONYA PRICE: My name is Tonya Price.
9 I am a Professor of Anthropology and I teach Black
10 Studies at UMKC. I am here because I wanted to
11 express my support, and I am so happy to see so many
12 people out here expressing their support. I don't
13 have to say a whole lot. I just want to put in my
14 two cents, and that is that our history is
15 important, it must be preserved. I think that the
16 archives should stay in this community. I think it
17 deserves state support, it deserves city support,
18 it deserves private support, and it deserves the
19 support of the community. And we have that
20 beginning here today. And I just hope that we can
21 sustain it. I pray that we can sustain it.

22 There are experts here. We have heard
23 archivists, we have got college professors, we have
24 got black study teachers, we have got all kinds of
25 people with all kinds of expertise around here, so I

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1 know we can all do this. We can pull together as a
2 pool to let this happen. And I just would like to
3 offer my services. I am available if I am needed in

4 any capacity. And I will be talking with
5 Representative Brooks about that. So good evening.

6 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Ms. Owens.
7 Followed by Carla Hunning.

8 MS. OWENS: Good evening everybody. I am
9 very pleased that the meeting got moved to this
10 evening, because this is the birthday of the
11 Honorable Marcus M. Garvey. As we talk about the
12 red, black and green flag that was flying high over
13 the Black Archives, we need to celebrate that this
14 evening too, because he highly expected and favored
15 what Marcus Garvey had going. So we need to give a
16 clap to that, because that was part of Horace
17 Peterson.

18 I am pleased to be here with everybody
19 this evening, because I see Ms. Dianna Austin up in
20 the audience, who was Horace Peterson's secretary.
21 I was blessed to have worked for Horace Peterson. I
22 was his administrative assistant during the time,
23 the year and a half before his demise. So I have
24 been waiting for this opportunity to get up here,
25 more so than a lot of people.

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1 I didn't know there was an agenda set up
2 for everybody to have to speak to come in this
3 evening, because I would have been the first person
4 to call. Trust me. And as a lot of people got up

5 here, I'm sure they are real upset about the Black
6 Archives being closed, but no more so than the
7 original staff. Because it appears to me after his
8 death a whole lot of things changed in Kansas City.
9 You know what I am saying? And for those who really
10 knew Horace and really respected and appreciated the
11 Black Archives, then you know. So I have been
12 hearing, to me, a whole lot of perpetration
13 conversation. I know you all are real
14 disappointed. But if you are really going along
15 with what Horace was about, you should be more
16 disappointed for the archives closing. You should
17 be really disappointed that we haven't truly been
18 celebrating Juneteenth in Kansas City. You know
19 what I am saying?

20 So when I get up here, I can really talk
21 about a whole lot of things. So if you all are
22 disappointed, know the original staff is real
23 disappointed. I am going to try not to stay up here
24 over my time, but I want to bring up some issues,
25 okay? Because I am an issue person.

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1 I hear a lot of people coming up and
2 talking about what they plan to do. We don't need
3 you to do a whole lot of talking. I want to say
4 this, we shouldn't have to do a whole lot of
5 discussion about keeping the archives open in Kansas

6 City, because it is a museum. I know the Nelson
7 Atkins Museum is not having a problem staying open.
8 I am seeing them rebuild and expand. And I was
9 volunteering with them, because I have worked youth,
10 which I have a youth program, the Rising Sons and
11 Daughters Youth Program that has been in Kansas City
12 for 21 years. So the youth that came up here, I
13 know we keep a lot of things covered up around here,
14 but there are programs. We have an army of 4,000
15 youth in Kansas City between the ages of 6 and 32.

16 So if you really want to learn about what
17 is going on, history is supposed to start at home.
18 We got a bunch of uneducated adults in Kansas City
19 that don't even know their own history, so you can't
20 expect them to teach it to the children. But my
21 thing with everybody is, everybody needs to belong
22 to an organization. If we are ever to keep the
23 archives open, that is the organization we ought to
24 learn from. If the youth really want to do
25 something, if your parents really want your children

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1 do more than sagging, playing the loud music,
2 faking the lifestyle they really can't afford. If
3 you don't want to lock them in prison, then you need
4 to help keep the archives open. That is an
5 organization we all can get on board and get going.

6 So if we are really interested and excited

7 and upset, that is the organization we ought to be
8 about. Everybody may not be NAACP and Urban League
9 people. I am not. I am happy those organizations
10 are here, but as time has gone on from the 60's, we
11 are not into civil rights anymore. We are into
12 human rights. So I am not going to jump on the band
13 wagon of civil rights, I am going to jump on human
14 rights. Human rights means keep the Black Archives
15 open. We shouldn't have to come and beg to keep it
16 open. It is a museum, and if everybody whose
17 original culture and history stems from Africa,
18 okay, then everybody in this community, whatever
19 race you are, should be down for keeping it open.

20 And unfortunately there is not a lot more
21 time for me to talk, because I like history too.
22 But I want to not thank everybody who left early to
23 hear what everybody had to say. And I do want to
24 thank you all for coming. Mr. Nixon. But if
25 something is going on in the community, I feel you

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1 should be here anyway to hear how the rest of us
2 feel, because the dividing line that has been in
3 Kansas City is still here, and racism is still alive
4 and well. Thank you.

5 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Carol Coe.

6 MS. CAROL COE: We have known Jay Nixon
7 for over 20 years. He has been door to door in

8 Wayne Minor and Charlie Parker Square. He is not
9 new here. People are thanking him for being here.
10 He has always been here when we needed him. I thank
11 you for being here again, and you are not a
12 stranger. You all know I have had a stroke and I
13 don't talk often now. I have two ears and one mouth
14 and I like to listen now.

15 But Horace, I was the chairman of the
16 board for five years. He never had enough money.
17 There just wasn't about the enough money to run the
18 archives. We have to come to a solution now and
19 summarize it. Number one, we want the archives
20 open. Number two, we want to restructure the
21 board. I don't know, you said there is an interim
22 board, one person said I am the only board,
23 somebody says they are meeting with the parks
24 department. Clear that up. What is the status of
25 the board? We deserve to know that when we go out

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1 into the community.

2 Our second thing we have to include,
3 Saundra, Alvin, you are or at the city. You have
4 two million dollars to build that building and
5 restructure the building. The bids go out this
6 fall. Get on top of it and see that the building is
7 built. Horace deserves more than a thing in the
8 lobby at the Negro Leagues. The two million dollars

9 is already in the budget. We don't have to raise
10 any money, it is already there. Talk to the Mayor,
11 talk to Alvin Brooks and all these pretenders that
12 want to be the mayor, have them step forward and
13 give us the archives.

14 Number three, also the people told you we
15 are in jeopardy of humidity ruining documents. Act
16 speedily to secure the documents and preserve the
17 documents. All this about our history, all this
18 boycott, this is nonsense. What we have to do is
19 preserve the documents right now.

20 Also, the fourth thing. The man told you
21 Carter Broadcasting is willing to market this idea.
22 They have 220,000 listeners. If everybody gave a
23 dollar, booming and banging on KPRS, that is a
24 quarter of a million dollars right there. Charity
25 begins at home. Take them up.

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1 Finally, I would recommend that we put
2 Sharon Sanders Brooks in an interim position to
3 coordinate all this and identify all those people
4 that came up and volunteered their service. All of
5 you that want to clean up. All the civil rights
6 organizations that want to do something. We have to
7 have somebody coordinate. It does us no good to
8 come here and sit out here thinking that we have
9 done something, and we have not done our business.

10 Take care of the business.

11 We should take care of our own community.

12 Also Melba Curls was here, Senator Wilson was here,
13 all of these political people, hold them
14 accountable. They represent you. Let them come up
15 with a plan and present it in the Call Paper and the
16 Globe Paper and we can read about what direction we
17 are going in. No one should leave this place
18 undecided and not knowing what is happening. I
19 would recommend Sharon Brooks to coordinate this
20 effort about volunteering. And Jan is here too.
21 Jan was chairman of the board when I left. We have
22 many historical, Tilman Stewart was here, Alllen
23 Gray was here. Allen Gray, they had Alvin Ailey's
24 stuff put in the archives. It would be a shame to
25 lose all of that latest stuff. I am tired you-all.

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1 Thank you.

2 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Tilman Stewart.

3 Is he here still? And Robert Farmsworth.

4 MR. TILMAN STEWART: Good evening. My
5 name is Tilman Stewart. And as Ms. Coe was just
6 here, next to the passion of Horace Peterson, you
7 will have to say Carol had that passion. I am here
8 as a friend of Horace Peterson. As a friend of
9 Horace, I kind of see things probably a little
10 different. So this is a real chilly evening for

11 me. Okay. I saw Horace too start early, beginning
12 to collect and put things in the trunk of his car at
13 31st and Prospect, the Human Resources Corporation,
14 where history will share another gentleman Mr.
15 Brooks, who was a labor leader here in Kansas City
16 who was a director at that time.

17 I have traveled with Horace down here to
18 18th and Vine into the world's smallest museum. And
19 even a lot of folk who are acquainted with 18th and
20 Vine now, could probably not point out where the
21 world's smallest museum existed. Horace would go in
22 there, if it was 100 outside, it would be 115 or 20
23 inside this place. It was a long shotgun building.
24 I can't think of the gentleman's name and his wife
25 who were there, but they would be all back in the

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1 farthest depths of this building. And they had
2 collected some of everything in Kansas City.

3 And Horace would go in there and find
4 pictures. He was an excellent horse trader. So he
5 could bargain with Mr. Brown, I think, I can't
6 recall his exact name, and get these things and put
7 them in his car and come back to 31st and Prospect,
8 the Human Resource. Our lunch period was supposed
9 to be from 12:00 to 1:00. Sometimes we would be a
10 little over time. And Mr. Brooks would ask us,
11 "Hey, where have you been?" And we would be so

12 dirty coming back. He would say, "Well, what have
13 you been doing?" We couldn't tell him. But these
14 again are some of the things that have happened that
15 is about Horace. The difference of knowing what it
16 meant to him to collect and preserve those things
17 that were pertinent to African Americans.

18 I was with Horace the weekend preceding
19 his death, and Horace made me come go with him to
20 listen to some groups that he was getting ready for
21 Juneteenth. I had to leave town that Saturday
22 morning. This was a Friday night. At 6:00 o'clock
23 in the morning I had to catch a plane. He says,
24 "Hey, Tilman you'll have a long time to sit in a
25 wheelchair. Sit in a rocking chair. He says, "Come

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1 and go with me. You've got to see these people. I
2 have got people coming in here from New York. I
3 have got people coming in here from a lot of
4 different places, you have got to go." And we went
5 around this community listening to folk. The time
6 ran out. About 12:00 or 1:00 or 2:00 o'clock in the
7 morning when he finished doing all of this. And I
8 left the city and heard this tragic information
9 relative to his death.

10 In coming back and after Horace's
11 transition, I became a party to working at the
12 archives on a volunteer basis. Ms. Ruby Jackson,

13 who was instrumental in the archives having its
14 first space in the YMCA again that you have heard
15 about. But that's where the archives started from.
16 And there are also some other people here who are
17 very concerned about the archives, who you maybe
18 don't see, like Brenda Gower, as folk you know in
19 the community.

20 But the existence of the archives is far
21 more than I think what we really think it should
22 be. It has a greater meaning in terms of the
23 existence of people. And the common man was
24 something that Horace also emphasized relative to
25 the existence of the archives. And that's why it is

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1 so important. That's why a lot of these people are
2 here tonight. And if you didn't learn anything or
3 if you have never been to the archives, you have
4 certainly had some history lessons tonight. Just by
5 virtue of the Negro Baseball League. Not everyone
6 knows where that emanated from, but that was an idea
7 of Horace Peterson. And you will never have an
8 experience, unless you were with Horace Peterson, if
9 you didn't go to the Satchel Paige home. I have
10 been with him going to the Satchel Paige home, and
11 where family members were playing with Satchel
12 Paige's glove out in the back yard in the rain, and
13 Horace went berserk. What are you doing out here

14 playing with so-and-so. He scared the kids. But
15 here again, that was his passion.

16 I was in Washington, D.C. with Horace when
17 he was going for his training, and at that juncture
18 there was a mayoral election taking place. And
19 Arthur Fletcher, who some of you all are probably
20 familiar with, but who was eminent in the civil
21 rights movement, even though he was a republican.
22 But Arthur Fletcher had posters up in the city, and
23 as we were there doing one thing, Horace decided,
24 "Hey, let's get all of these posters." So we
25 collected all of those posters that we could find.

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1 Okay. And they are in the archives someplace
2 today. Mr. Fletcher has transitioned as well.
3 Okay. But the information, again, is very
4 pertinent. I am here as his friend. I was so happy
5 to hear his wife acknowledge again his personal
6 contributions and the contributions to the
7 community.

8 Another thing in reference to the
9 archives. The first exhibition for the Black
10 Archives was held at Crown Center. Okay. That
11 again says something in reference to the dynamics
12 and the diversity, and Horace in reference to his
13 vision. Inasmuch as we are all concerned about our
14 African American history and our heritage and our

15 legacy, we are also inclusive, because we have kind
16 of tracked this thing again with some other folks.
17 So I trust that the right thing occurs. And I trust
18 that the existence of the archives is a long and
19 intact relative to the mission. That it goes on as
20 an institution into perpetuity. Thank you.

21 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Robert
22 Farnsworth. Then we are joined by Representative
23 Craig Bland.

24 MR. ROBERT FARNSWORTH: I wrote what I
25 have to say out of a couple of experiences in the

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1 last two years with the Black Archives. As you have
2 learned tonight, that isn't the best time for the
3 Black Archives, but I hope some of these experiences
4 may have some relevance to what we are talking about
5 tonight.

6 Horace Peterson's dream for the Black
7 Archives is a worthy dream. It still remains the
8 most desirable goal for the future of the archives.
9 But the failure of the archives also must not be
10 repeated, or that ultimate dream will only be pushed
11 further into a dim and uncertain future.

12 I have had two professional experiences
13 that bear on this matter. When I began researching
14 the biography of Leon Jordan, the founder of Freedom
15 Incorporated about two years ago, I first went to

16 the Black Archives. Bill Livingston was very
17 helpful and came up with some useful material for
18 me, but I was appalled that there were no tools in
19 place for any researcher to find what was
20 available. Bill was the only key in the filing
21 system. What he had in his head was the only means
22 for anybody to find anything. Valuable documents
23 were preserved only by putting them in the file
24 folders. Archivally this was a mess. When I tried
25 to return to the archives a year or so later, the

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1 building itself was closed and the archives
2 inaccessible.

3 My second experience is only indirectly
4 related to the archives. Richard Tolbert told me
5 that he had seen family papers in Jordan's former
6 home then up for sale. He asked me to trust him to
7 find out about these papers. After some weeks
8 without results, I located the granddaughter of the
9 man Orchid Jordan married after the death of Leon.
10 She was the executor of her grandfather's estate.
11 She was cordial over the phone and told me there was
12 a scrapbook of librarian material that she thought I
13 might be interested in. She asked me to call in a
14 few days. I did. But she would not talk to me
15 again. I wrote her a letter, and no response.

16 A few months ago I was surprised to learn

17 the special collections of the Miller Nichols
18 Library had purchased the collection of Jordan
19 papers from a dealer, including a scrapbook
20 containing hundreds of photographs from the Jordan's
21 Liberian years. I learned who the dealer was and
22 talked to him. He told me that he rescued the
23 collection from a dumpster from the Jordan home.
24 The photos and the scrapbook Orchid Jordan's
25 granddaughter remembered have now been digitized. I

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1 believe she was embarrassed to find the scrapbook
2 had been thrown away about the time I called.
3 With the support of Representative
4 Incumbent Emanuel Cleaver, I have taken digital
5 copies to Washington to show the acting ambassador
6 of Liberia and officials of our own State
7 Department. All have agreed these photos are
8 historically very significant. They reveal
9 well-known public figures from around the world,
10 including many African American leaders attending
11 the second inauguration of President William V.S.
12 Tubman. There are photos of Haile Selassie, General
13 Benjamin Davis, Mary Methune, Ebba Botin and many
14 others. Over a two-week period Putnam took his
15 guests on a tour of the major attractions of
16 Liberia. Jordan's photos are an extraordinary
17 record of those events. We can all be thankful that

18 these materials not only have been saved, but are
19 now being preserved for the understanding of
20 scholars and ordinary citizens interested in the
21 accomplishments of a significant black American
22 leader in Kansas City.

23 I feel this material would have been given
24 to the Black Archives, but the Black Archives
25 apparently had little power or credibility in the

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1 community to attract such material. And if it had
2 gained control over the material, it did not have
3 the means to preserve it as it has now been
4 preserved.

5 Significant black American historical
6 material from Kansas City is now being preserved in
7 the Missouri Valley Room, Western Missouri Archives
8 and the special collections of the Miller Nichols
9 Library. These are regrettably seen as white
10 controlled and the technical resources they have
11 unfortunately make it discouraging for many black
12 Americans to bring to them materials from their
13 personal and family histories.

14 The Black Archives, if it can function
15 with the technical resources these facilities
16 have -- I'm sorry -- would solve this problem.
17 Reconstituting the Black Archives with the expertise
18 and resources of these facilities is clearly the

19 ideal solution. I would even like to dream on that
20 a Black Archives so reconstituted could eventually
21 become a leader in connecting the resources now
22 scattered in several places by Internet
23 communication. Digitizing records now certainly
24 opens up that possibility. But first and foremost,
25 we must be sure that the historical material Horace

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1 Peterson dreamed about is truly collected and
2 preserved for the public good. Reconstituting the
3 Black Archives, as it should be, will require major
4 resources and commitment. It must not be allowed to
5 drift again to the condition it presently finds
6 itself. Thank you.

7 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Representative
8 Craig Bland. Then Margo Weatherby. Jan Anderson.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CRAIG BLAND: Good
10 evening. I think this can really be a great day,
11 and I know that it is, that we all have the
12 opportunity to keep something that is really true to
13 us in our community. But the only way that we are
14 going to be able to do that is by listening
15 collectively, coming together in our community, by
16 trying to make this the best that it can be.

17 When I heard about all that was going on
18 at the Black Archives, I had time to talk to some
19 people about that. And you know it was such a

20 catastrophe to me, because I remember Horace
21 Peterson. I was much younger back then. I was
22 involved with Freedom Incorporated when I was a
23 young boy, and I remember Horace knowing all the
24 collective efforts with other people, trying to
25 bring something to our community where our children

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1 would be proud of and be able to see, and be proud
2 of ourselves and all our heritage. And it will be a
3 catastrophe if we don't come together and do
4 something about that.

5 We appreciate Attorney General Jay Nixon
6 and his staff to taking the time to try to help us,
7 but we have to learn and do and help ourselves. I
8 have been going to meetings all my life. I remember
9 my mother, when I was younger. A lot of times I was
10 volunteered to take my mother to the meetings. And
11 so many times, when we came back from the meetings,
12 what came out of the meeting? We got Councilman
13 Alvin Brooks, Mayor Pro Tem. Representative Michael
14 Brown. Representative Sharon Sanders Brooks. We
15 have got Councilwoman Saundra Weaver. We have the
16 collective people in our government, state, city,
17 county, to find some way to bring this together.
18 And I am sure the Attorney General's Office is going
19 to help us, continue to help us. One thing, that he
20 has definitely kept in touch with all of us, to let

21 us know what was going on through his office and
22 what was going on through this whole process. But
23 he can't do it by himself. We have to collectively
24 come together to find out what is going to come out
25 of all this. We can meet, meet, meet, meet and it

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1 ain't going to mean nothing. This is something that
2 is viable and very important to our community.

3 When all this is going on and first
4 started, I walked up in there, and the things that I
5 have seen -- and I am not proud of it. I was
6 brought up in parochial school, so there is a lot of
7 black history that I didn't experience. But for us
8 to lose that, it will be truly a catastrophe in the
9 Kansas City community.

10 So all I can say to all of you, is that I
11 am going to do everything within my power to help
12 all these other elected officials, and the community
13 leaders, to try to make this a viable project and
14 make it work. We are asking all of you, because all
15 of you are important too. Just like we got
16 elected. We can't do nothing without you. We have
17 to come together. Like Councilwoman Weaver said, if
18 we got to give five dollars out, two dollars, it
19 don't matter, but we have to have a plan to do
20 something that is viable. Please do all you can
21 do. I will be there. Thank you.

22 MS. MARGO WEATHERBY: Good evening ladies
23 and gentlemen. I wasn't expecting to speak. I was
24 going to write my speech down and hand it in. I was
25 going to be okay with that. I just want to say that

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1 the need for this organization in our community is
2 vital. However, the accountability and the ability
3 to compete is definitely necessary as well, or we
4 will end up in the same position that we are today.

5 I am glad to see the public interest, and
6 definitely our Attorney General here and our
7 politicians here. I also would like to see us live
8 up to our conviction in our community. I am the
9 past chairman of the Black Archives. I served in
10 1994, I joined the board, and was also chairman in
11 1995 after Jan Anderson. I also met Horace and
12 Tilman Stewart when they were operating the Black
13 Archives out of the trunk of a car back in 1974. At
14 that point I was a bright-eyed student here away
15 from college. Didn't go back, and ended up
16 volunteering and helping the Black Archives move
17 into the fire station of which I was quite proud.
18 Of course I am a child of the 50's or the 60's, I
19 should say the 70's especially, during the era in
20 Kansas City where we fought for a lot of our
21 accomplishments that we have today. So I was quite
22 proud to be a part of the Black Archives, in

23 whatever capacity I could be in.

24 As I helped them to move into the fire
25 station, I moved on with my career in a different

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1 direction, but I volunteered whenever I could
2 possibly do that. I was quite proud in '95 to
3 become chairman of the board. So it is this point
4 in time I would like to say I offer my conviction
5 and my commitment to continue to help the
6 organization in whatever capacity I can. And that's
7 all I have to say. Thank you.

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Jan Anderson and
9 Pat Jordan.

10 MS. JAN ANDERSON: Attorney Nixon.
11 Ms. Peterson. All honorable guests and concerned
12 citizens. Jambo. Hello. Yo-Baby-Yo. All of these
13 are greetings. I didn't plan to give a speech,
14 because I am like Sister Saundra over there. I just
15 came off a plane out of the bush of Jamaica with no
16 lotion, no soap, no toothpaste. They took all of
17 that, couldn't get on the airplane. But I am here,
18 because my mother who is here just this side of
19 accosting me, who is better known as one of the
20 number one volunteers of BAMA, which is Black
21 Archives of Mid-America, given to her by Horace
22 Peterson. So I can't even get home to get a shower,
23 if you will, before passing here. But to go on.

24 I am Jan Anderson and I am a founding
25 board member, and I was chairman of the board from

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1 1985 to 1995. And was happy to follow Carol Coe, a
2 great leader. But to move on.

3 I don't want to beat the dead horse. A
4 lot of things have been said. But however, I will
5 add two things. First of all, Tilman said it, Margo
6 said it, Black Archives started out of the trunk of
7 a car, okay, for people.

8 Secondly, I believe I heard Mrs. Russell
9 mention being international. Pete and I had
10 discussed back in the late 80's that we needed an
11 international link. So I decided, well, fine, let's
12 do that, develop a program which was an
13 international student exchange between Kansas City,
14 Missouri Public School District students, which I am
15 now a teacher for that district for 30 years
16 practically.

17 Anyway, we did the exchange program. It
18 was such an excellent program it went down in the
19 Congressional Records of the United States and was
20 presented to the University of the West Indies in
21 Kingston, Jamaica. It has been stated by all what
22 the problems are. Pete would say, "Boy, it is hard
23 on the corner." Okay. Yes, it is. Let Pete's
24 legacy continue, by not only talking the talk, let's

25 walk the walk. I feel like Moses, that I might not

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1 be here to get to the Promised Land, because there
2 is an outgrowth of the International Student
3 Exchange with Jamaica that is moving forward, so I
4 am still involved in that. But I also feel like
5 Joshua. I plan on my family moving forward with
6 this if nobody else does. So after the call, let's
7 walk.

8 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Pat Jordan.
9 Then Alvin Brooks.

10 MS. PAT JORDAN: Such a wonderful,
11 wonderful family reunion. Good evening. My name is
12 Pat Jordan, I am Executive Vice President for
13 AmoroCorp and President of Gem Cultural and
14 Educational Center. I have been in the forefront of
15 arts management for over 15 years now, having
16 spearheaded the renovation of the Gem Theater, the
17 building in which we now sit.

18 I have come to the understanding that we
19 have to somehow determine new ways in which to share
20 shrinking resources for the arts. When it comes to
21 art and historical organizations, especially those
22 of color, the resources are barely there. I have
23 served on the boards of directors of many arts
24 organizations, and clearly majority organizations
25 have resources, those wealthy individuals who serve

1 not only as ambassadors and volunteers, but donate
2 large amounts of personal income and properties as
3 well. Such simply does not exist within the African
4 American community.

5 It is extremely important that the
6 documents and artifacts that are housed at the Black
7 Archives, as many of you have said this tonight,
8 remain in the community from which they came. How
9 do we make sure that happens? How do we make sure
10 that the mission of the archives is sustained?
11 Unfortunately, we probably cannot determine all of
12 that in the few hours that we have here tonight.
13 But I would recommend that a special committee be
14 formed to first put together a temporary plan for
15 housing and securing the archives. Secondly, to
16 examine any proposals put forth by individual
17 citizens and organizations in the community. And
18 thirdly, to seek ways to capitalize on partnerships
19 between communities, individuals and organizations
20 which will assure the best use of these valuable
21 materials for the community from which they came and
22 the communities at large. I pledge my time, my
23 energy, to serve on such a committee and to recruit
24 others whose skills can be utilized as well. Thank
25 you all for your time.

1 MR. KAREEM: Good afternoon. I would
2 like to thank the Attorney General, Mr. Nixon, and
3 Ms. Peterson. I am Marad Kareem. I am here to
4 represent the Nation of Islam that was here in
5 Kansas City in 1973, 1974 when we were at our height
6 of activity. And I thought it would be remiss if I
7 didn't come up and share with the Governor -- I mean
8 with the Attorney General what took place in our
9 involvement in the Black Archives.

10 Horace Peterson, he was a friend of the
11 Nation of Islam as well. He took care of us like he
12 took care of everyone else. In 1975 the Honorable
13 Elijah Muhammad had passed. And there were 44 years
14 of history of the Nation of Islam. Because we had
15 his son, Nathaniel Muhammad, as a minister here in
16 Kansas City, he inherited a great deal of those
17 artifacts and those histories what took place in the
18 Nation of Islam nationally as well as locally here
19 in Kansas City. And we discussed the matter with
20 Horace Peterson after the passing of Elijah
21 Muhammad. And he agreed to take all of the
22 artifacts, to take all of the history, to take all
23 the pictures, to take all the records, all the
24 uniforms, everything that we did, and preserve them
25 in the Black Archives, which he did.

1 In 1995 I went to the Black Archives, we
2 were doing a promotion at the Paseo High School
3 honoring the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. So we went
4 to the Black Archives in order to get some material
5 so that we could use this in props. We were denied
6 that request. But I still asked if I could see some
7 of the material that we had donated. And like the
8 gentleman that spoke in regards to Leon Jordan, we
9 found the same thing. That our material was ill
10 repaired. It was being ruined. We saw mildew. We
11 saw mold around it. That put up a great concern as
12 to what was taking place at the Black Archives. And
13 we are not here to lambast or to criticize. I just
14 want to let you know that we have an interest in
15 this as well. So we want to go out into the
16 community, and all the Muslims that were here and
17 participated. If there is anything that we can do
18 as far as donating our monies, that we are willing
19 to do so, because we have a vested interest in the
20 Black Archives of Mid-America. I thank you very
21 much for allowing me to say a few words. Thank
22 you.

23 MS. DELMIRA QUARLES KAMEHAMEHA: Good
24 afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Aloha. My name is
25 Delmira Quantes Kamehameha. I am a native of New

1 York City. I have been here for 15 years. I am
2 also the president of NAHRA, the National
3 Association for Human Rights in America. We monitor
4 human rights violations in Kansas City. We have
5 been doing that for some time. We do advocate for
6 seniors and children who are disabled also.

7 I wanted to speak to you today because I
8 am a representative of the Alvin Ailey family who
9 has been in Kansas City for over, oh, I have been
10 here 15 years. My grandmother who came here in 1946
11 has been here for 65 years. She passed two years
12 ago. And she was also a native of Texas. Some of
13 you have not seen us here, but we have been here for
14 a very long time in the background. And I wanted to
15 say to you, that since I made Kansas City my home,
16 it was an honor for me to have known my grandmother
17 who knew everything in Kansas City when I didn't.
18 That's how I got my history here about Kansas City
19 and the Black Archives.

20 She knew Mr. Horace Peterson, and my
21 father did, who passed five years ago. He also was
22 history, going into jazz here in Kansas City. He
23 was a famous jazz player. He actually graduated
24 from Julliard School of Music in New York and came
25 here to Kansas City during his mother's time too.

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1 One of the things I want to say to you is

2 I heard the Mayor speak of an international city.
3 Well, our family has been international for
4 generations. We in the Alvin Ailey family are
5 international. We are scattered throughout the
6 world. And no one has ever heard of us, but we have
7 been here for many years. So I want to say to you
8 this, I have enjoyed being in Kansas City, but there
9 are some things that need to be changed. First of
10 all, we have to remember that we are a family. We
11 are the seed. I am a seed of my grandmother. You
12 are the seed of your grandmother and great
13 grandmother. I was quite surprised to see the jazz
14 museum not being owned by you the family, but by
15 someone else. That was quite startling to me. I
16 was quite surprised to see that actually people of
17 color in Missouri own very little. And I am saying
18 that not to criticize. But people who come, who are
19 international, and I suppose I should say that I am
20 an international person. I was born in New York.
21 My family is scattered from Mexico to Puerto Rico to
22 Hawaii to France. Yes, the Alvin Ailey family was
23 international. And Alvin came here because his
24 family was here. I know there has been some talk
25 about because of other things, but he came here

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1 because he had family here. You see years ago when
2 my father was a young man, he traveled to New York

3 for the first time, where he met my mother. She was
4 born in Hawaii. She was of the royal family. Well,
5 it was taboo at that time for anyone to marry,
6 intermarriage, especially another royal. She was
7 already promised to someone else.

8 The reason I am telling you this story is
9 because it is history. We would like to share that
10 history with you, but we are not going to give any
11 artifacts until we have qualified people, not with
12 titles, but with heart. I am not concerned about
13 who you are or what you are or where you come from,
14 but your heart has to be right. And I just want to
15 say this, because we are family, the family of
16 mankind I am speaking of now, we are all a part of
17 Africa. And we should care about what happens to
18 the Black Archives. It is our history. It is the
19 world's history. It is a history that we have given
20 the world from the time we gave him the alphabet.
21 The Mason Tree. The first church. There is nowhere
22 in the world that you can go that we are not there.
23 So we are family.

24 I want you to know this: You are going to
25 have to change your ways with regards to title and

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1 positions. They don't make people. There is no one
2 lesser or greater than the other. Our family is
3 committed. As I said, I am committed here. I love

4 Kansas City. I made a little mistake, I first came
5 here and I had a Yankee's uniform on at the Jets --
6 the Kansas City Chiefs, and that was a mistake. But
7 I have come to love Kansas City, and now I am
8 wearing a Chief's outfit.

9 But I want to say this to you: If you want
10 to be international, you have to think
11 international. That means inclusion, not
12 exclusion. Everyone must be included. And so I
13 want to say to you, thank you for all of you being
14 here, all the members, everyone here. And I want to
15 thank the Attorney General for his kind
16 consideration in this important matter. Thank you
17 very much.

18 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: Mayor Pro Tem
19 Brooks. The hardest working man in the business.

20 MAYOR PRO TEM ALVIN BROOKS: Attorney
21 General Nixon and to your staff and to State
22 Representative Brooks, my daughter as she
23 occasionally says, and to Senator Wilson.

24 Over time wisdom catches up with you, and
25 somewhere you are told, Don't sign until you read.

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1 And I read, so I didn't sign up to speak, like some
2 of you did, not having read. But I did think that
3 it would be appropriate to make just a few remarks.

4 I am a former police officer in Kansas

5 City, and I was assigned to the unit of detective in
6 the late 50's. I had an opportunity to run across a
7 little fellow. An incident occurred, and I won't
8 tell you what it was, but I walked him up the street
9 to -- I believe it was Blackwell's Beauty Shop, in
10 the 3000 block of Indiana. I conferred with the
11 lady there and told her, as I had this youngster by
12 my hand, told her I had him to tell her what he had
13 done and he did that. And as I walked out, I can
14 hear him hollering now from getting that whipping.
15 They didn't have 1-800 then that you could call.
16 That was Horace Peterson, III. He was about nine
17 years old. So that must have been about 1958 or
18 abouts.

19 I was assistant city manager in the mid
20 70's here in city government, and this same little
21 fellow, who was now grown, came to me with this
22 grandiose idea about the archives. I was one of a
23 number of people who he approached. And most of us,
24 you know, kind of said yeah, yeah, man, you can do
25 this, go do it. Follow your dream and go on. Who

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1 would have thought in 2006, what that vision, that
2 passion, that commitment and dedication that Horace
3 had would bring us to where we are today.

4 So I congratulate all of those board
5 members of years gone by who tried to keep it

6 alive. And Ms. Peterson, thank you. I know that
7 you had a number of sleepless nights when Horace was
8 out there trying to sell his idea to the community.
9 He did a great job of doing that.

10 Now we have heard a lot of talk this
11 evening, but now it is time for us to roll up our
12 sleeves and go to work. Whoever the members of that
13 board are, and the chair is, and the volunteers are,
14 we need to get behind them and support them. I mean
15 financially.

16 Now, Ms. Coe, I don't know whether she is
17 still in the building. I have a memo dated June
18 2nd, 2005 from Troy Schulte, who is the budget
19 director of this city, to Wayne Cauthen the city
20 manager. Mr. Cauthen was here but had to leave. It
21 says, "Subject: Black Archives funding." It goes
22 down the manner in which the archives are funded by
23 the city, but one part I want to share with you. It
24 says here -- and this should not begin a sentence
25 like this. It says, "At the same time, discussion

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1 was held about transferring the old park maintenance
2 facility at 17th Terrace and Vine to provide
3 community groups who can take advantage of the
4 available space as well as abating blight inference
5 on the neighborhood. Also discussed was that an
6 improved facilities for Black Archives will be

7 allowed for more private funding to occur, and
8 offset the scheduled reduction in city's operating
9 support." Then there was attendance at this
10 discussion. Then it says, "Beginning in the fiscal
11 year 2002-2003 through the current year, a total of
12 \$4.2 million has been allocated from capital
13 improvement sales tax to fund restoration of the
14 building. That project is fully funded and is to be
15 completed by the end of the year 2006."

16 So the money is there. You heard about
17 the report in terms of when it will be completed. I
18 am looking forward, as a council person, to be there
19 with them when they cut the ribbon for that. But I
20 am also looking forward to the day when we as a
21 community will look within the community to keep the
22 Black Archives going. Not that we won't need help
23 from foundations, from the private sector, other
24 persons. But we are the only community that has to
25 go out and beg at the beginning. It seems to me

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1 that we ought to have a commitment to put up funds
2 and say we want you to match this. And it begins
3 with each one of us. I am willing to make a
4 commitment and a pledge to the Black Archives,
5 whatever little finances that I have, to take part
6 of that and make a commitment and pledge over time
7 to see that it happens. And I raise the question to

8 you, are you willing to do that? We have heard a
9 lot of rhetoric tonight. Now the proof is in the
10 pudding in terms of where you are.

11 Let me close with a poem by Langston
12 Hughes, one of my favorite poets. Some of you have
13 heard me recite this before. It was written on the
14 tenth anniversary of Brown versus Board of
15 Education. Langston Hughes says, "There is a dream
16 in the land with its back against the wall. By
17 muddled names and strange this dream is sometimes
18 called. There are those who claim this dream is
19 theirs alone. A sin for which we know they must
20 atone. Unless this dream is shared in common like
21 sunlight and like air, this dream will die for lack
22 of substance anywhere. It knows no frontier or
23 tongue. It knows no class or race. This dream
24 cannot be held secure in any one locked place. But
25 today, today as we leave tonight, this dream

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1 embattled with its back against the wall, but to
2 save the dream for one, it must be saved for all."

3 That's our challenge. That is the
4 challenge that we ought to leave here with tonight.
5 That to keep this dream, Horace Peterson, III's
6 dream alive, the African American community in
7 Kansas City's dream alive, and if we are going to do
8 that, it means everybody has got to pinch those

9 pennies and give to this cause to make it happen.
10 And then we can say to the broader community,
11 "Here's what we have done and we want you to support
12 and help us." But until that time, until that time,
13 we need to be mobilized and organized within the
14 community to see that that happens. Thank you
15 Mr. Attorney General.

16 ATTORNEY GENERAL NIXON: I want to thank
17 everyone for their hard work and stunning
18 preparation for this evening. The respectful way in
19 which we quickly, in a short three-hour period,
20 worked through 64 witnesses is an impressive bit of
21 discipline by us all.

22 So as we leave here tonight, we were here
23 to listen and learn and to use. And I pledge to
24 you, obviously we will use every legal tool we have
25 to make sure that things stay where they are, and

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1 that in the future they will be there more
2 accessible, and more usable for all to learn from.

3 That will conclude the hearing for this
4 evening. A record will be available. We will be in
5 contact with everyone as we move through the next
6 process. I cannot tell you how much my staff and I
7 personally thank you, and literally hundreds of
8 others that have contacted us in this matter. We
9 will move quickly, decisively, but most importantly

10 collaboratively.

11 And while I will return tonight to
12 Jefferson City, the only thing that I will take from
13 this area are the remembrances of your testimony
14 this evening. And I want to close by thanking once
15 again Ms. Peterson for opening this evening and
16 putting into a frame for us to see with great
17 clarity what our task and responsibility is in order
18 to live up to Horace's specific and lovely vision.
19 Thank you. Good night.

20 - - - - -

21
22 The following comments were submitted in written
23 form.

24
25

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1 CENTRAL MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
2 Department of History and Anthropology
3 17 August 2006
4 The Honorable Jay Nixon
5 Attorney General of the State of Missouri

6 Dear Mr. Nixon,

7 First, I applaud your time taken for a Public
8 Hearing to revitalize the Black Archives of
9 Mid-America and to re-ignite the public's sense of
10 its treasures. And, I appreciate the chance to
speak from two vantage points, professional and
personal.

As an academic, an archivist, and a museum director
for nearly thirty years, I constantly witness the
magic of collections during the genuine event of
active learning - whether by a group, a visitor, a
patron, a citizen, a researcher, but most important,

11 by students of all ages. There are no substitutes
12 for the original and irreplaceable objects of our
past for accuracy, reference, and excitement -
13 whether a document, an artifact, picture or place.

14 As a native Missourian, born and raised in Trenton,
I experienced, at a young age, the "power of the
15 past" and its lesson of diversity. My (late) mother
had a Southern family background. By chance in
16 Grundy County, she discovered a slave-style wood
cabin not far from our home; an African American
17 lady, known as "Aunt Lucy," had lived there until
the turn-of-the-20th century. I will never forget
18 my first time inside that historical space; it
scared me, fascinated me, and, in part, contributed
19 to my pursuit of an academic life. My mother worked
with (the late) Horace Peterson to transfer "Aunt
20 Lucy's Cabin" to the Archives. I met Mr. Peterson
on many occasions in our home, and will forever
21 admire his passion for, and legacy of, the Archives
to Kansas City and to Missouri.

22 But archives and museums cannot and do not "stand
alone." They need daily advocacy, care, and
23 curation for the duration; that takes expertise,
time and money. I always tell my students about the
24 double-edge to collections: primary objects, large
and small, are the ultimate sources of knowledge;
25 but once faded or lost, they are gone forever.

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1 Please extend your best support to the Black
Archives of Mid-America and insure its future as
2 another avenue to our shared past.

3 Very sincerely,

4 John W. Sheets, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
5 Director, Archives and Museum

6 cc: Dr. Delia C. Gillis

7 *****

8 FROM: Delia Gillis
TO: dgillis@cmsu.edu
9 DATE: 7/27/2006 10:28:15 A.M.
SUBJECT: For Black Archives

10
11 4) IMLS Calls for 2007 Conservation Project Support
Grant Applications (U.S.)

12 Application Deadline: October 1, 2006

13 Washington, D.C. - The Institute of Museum and
14 Library Services is accepting grant applications to
15 the agency's FY 2007 Conservation Project Support
16 (CPS) program. "Roughly 190 million objects held in
17 America's collecting institutions are in need of
18 treatment," said agency director Dr. Anne-Imelda M.
19 Radice citing the Heritage Health Index
20 -<http://www.heritagepreservation.org/HHI/index.html>;
21 the first comprehensive survey of the condition of
22 preservation at museums, libraries, and archives.
23 "We must do better. I strongly encourage museums to
24 apply for these grants."

25 CPS awards matching grants to help museums identify
conservation needs and priorities and perform
activities to ensure the safekeeping of their
collections. The Institute funds four types of
collections: Nonliving, Natural
History/Anthropology, Living Plants, and Living
Animals.

There are seven categories of Conservation Project
Support activities. Applicants should apply under
the category that best meets their institution's
highest collections care needs (living animal
collections are eligible to apply for last three

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1 categories):

2 General Conversation Survey: to broadly assess all
3 of the museum's collections and environmental
conditions

4 Detailed Conservation Survey: to systematically
5 examine, item-by-item, all or part of a museum's
collections

6 Treatment: to conserve, preserve, or stabilize
7 collections

8 Environmental Survey: to assess a museum's
9 environmental conditions, including temperature,
relative humidity, and light

10 Environmental Improvements: to improve and/or
11 stabilize climatic conditions such as light,
temperature, relative humidity, vibration,
mold/fungus, pests, or air pollutants

12 Research: to conduct innovative conservation

13 research projects with potential benefits to the
field of conservation

14 Training: to train staff (including volunteers and
15 interns) in conservation and collections care (see
note below)

16 The Institute will provide up to \$150,000 for
17 successful grant proposals. For Impact Projects,
proposals with broad-reaching effects that benefit
18 multiple institutions, the maximum is increased to
\$250,000. All applicants may also apply for up to
19 \$10,000 in additional funds for an Education
Component that will educate the general public about
20 their conservation project. Click here for grant
application and guidelines:
21 [http://www.imls.gov/applicants/grants/conserv
Project.shtm](http://www.imls.gov/applicants/grants/conservProject.shtm).

22 To help museum applicants prepare proposals, the
Institute will host technical assistance audio
23 conference calls--dates, times, and telephone
numbers to be announced.

24

25 About the Institute of Museum and Library Services,
The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the
primary source of federal support for the nation's

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1 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Its mission
is to grow and sustain a "Nation of Learners"
2 because life-long learning is essential to a
democratic society and individual success. Through
3 its grant making, convenings, research and
publications, the Institute empowers museums and
4 libraries nationwide to provide leadership and
services to enhance learning in families and
5 communities, sustain cultural heritage, build
twenty-first-century skills, and increase civic
6 participation. To learn more about the Institute,
please visit: <http://www.imls.gov>.

7

8 Note: IMLS encourages applications in this category
from institutions that will provide professional
internships for museums that have suffered
9 disaster-related damages.

10 Eileen Maxwell
Public Affairs Officer
11 Institute of Museum and Library Services
1800 M Street, NW 9th Floor
12 Washington, DC 20036-5802
202-653-4632

13 202-653-4600 (fax)
14 emaxwell@imls.gov

15 Visit the Institute of Museum and Library Services
16 virtual press room for the agency's latest news
17 released, publications, logos, and Primary Source,
18 our monthly newsletter, at:
19 <http://www.imls.gov/pressroom.shtm>.

20 2) Digital infrastructure grants from National
21 Endowment for the Humanities

22 NEH has launched a new digital humanities initiative
23 aimed at supporting projects that utilize or study
24 the impact of digital technology. Details of the
25 Digital Humanities Initiative are posted on the Web
at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/digitalhumanities.html>.
As part of this new initiative, NEH will make
special digital humanities awards through its
challenge grants program. These new awards are
integrated into the NEH's regular challenge grants,
but they offer significant differences. Guidelines
are posted on the Web at
<http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/challenge.html>.
These awards are designed to strengthen
technological infrastructure, thereby enhancing an

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1 applicant institution's ability to make use of new
2 technologies in research, education, preservation,
3 and public programming in the humanities. Digital
4 humanities challenge funds may be used, for example,
5 to purchase equipment and software, renovate
6 computing centers devoted to the humanities, and
7 purchase databases. Through endowments, digital
8 humanities challenge funds can support maintenance
and upgrades of equipment, software, and data;
through endowments digital humanities challenge funds
can also support licensing fees, salaries of
technical staff, faculty and staff training in uses
of digital technology, and other ongoing expenses
associated with uses of digital technology in the
humanities.

9 Restrictions in the regular NEH challenge grants
10 program regarding multiple applications, subsequent
11 challenge grants, matching requirements, and gift
12 eligibility do not apply to digital humanities
13 challenge grants. Only one application, for either
a digital humanities initiative or a regular
challenge grant, may be submitted at any single
deadline (either the May or November deadline), but
an application for a regular challenge grant at one

14 deadline does not preclude an application for a
15 digital humanities challenge or grant at the other
16 deadline. The four-year waiting period between
17 challenge grants and 4:1 matching ratio required of
18 recipients of prior challenge grants are suspended
19 for the digital humanities challenge grants. A
20 digital humanities challenge grant may be held
21 concurrently with a regular challenge grant. The
22 limit on the amount of in-kind donations that may
23 count toward the matching requirement is suspended
24 for the digital awards.

25 Applications that involve digital humanities, in
whole or in significant part, may be designated as
coming in under the new digital humanities challenge
grant rules. Final designation of DHI status will,
however, be determined by NEH.

26 Frederick A. Winter, Ph.D.
27 Senior Program Officer
28 Office of Challenge Grants
29 National Endowment for the Humanities
30 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Room 420
31 Washington, D.C. 20506
32 (202) 606-8287/8309; fax: (202) 606-8579

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1 fwinter@neh.gov
2 Email: fwinter@neh.gov
3 Visit the website at
4 <http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/challenge.html>

5 HERITAGE HEALTH INDEX RECOMMENDATIONS

6 Every Institution recommitts to providing safe
7 conditions for the collections they hold in trust

8 Every collecting institution develops an emergency
9 plan to protect its collections

10 Every single institution assigns responsibility for
11 caring for collections to members of its staff

12 Individuals at all levels of government and in the
13 private sector assume responsibility for providing
14 the support that will allow these collections to
15 survive

16 *****

17 FROM: Mike Talboy
18 www.miketalboy.com

14 816-326-8721

15 The preservation of items and information from our
16 past should be pursued for all cultures and
17 communities. We are very fortunate to have such a
18 wonderful collection of pieces right here in our own
19 backyard. Achieves and historical pieces which are
20 available for future generations to learn about
21 their heritage and history are very important to
22 save. The knowledge gained from studying and
23 learning from our past is something I hold in very
24 high regard and I applaud any effort to ensure that
25 the information is not lost. I hope it is made
available for our children to both learn from and
enjoy. As your next State Representative from the
37th District I will do whatever is necessary to see
that the Black Archives are preserved, kept intact
and made available for generations to come. Thank
you for your participation today in helping keep
this important treasure available to our community.

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1 THE BLACK ARCHIVES OF MID-AMERICA RECOMMENDATIONS
2 AND SUGGESTIONS

3 FROM: BILL CURTIS
4 August 2006

5 The Black Archives is a major treasure of this area
6 and of the entire nation. It has not been managed
7 well and has fallen onto threatening times. This
8 resource should not be lost to our community. If
9 some other entity outside of the Kansas City area or
to a non-African American institution the immediate
problem would be that archival donations would
almost cease. There must be trust that these gifts
would be preserved and lovingly maintained and
deeply appreciated.

10 THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

11 A professional level Board of Directors is essential
12 for maintaining the Black Archives. It has too long
13 been the major problem that has finally brought the
14 Archives to its knees. It must no longer be a
self-perpetuating Board that has been used for power
play and personal agendas. To gain respect and
institute quality management there must be an
outside source for choosing the board members. It
is suggested for several reasons that this be the

15 Mayor and City Council of Kansas City, Missouri.
16 The Mayor would nominate and the City Council would
17 approve to fill vacancies on the Board. This would
18 take the Board out of the hands of vested interests
19 and also help gain the support of the city
20 government which it has lost.
21
22 One of the first functions of the Board of Directors
23 is to formulate a set of by-laws for management of
24 the Archives and for corporate status with the State
25 of Missouri. The Board should also maintain a
501(c)3 status for the Archives to ensure tax
deductible donations to the archives. The Board
should also get tax exempt status from the State of
Missouri.

23 BOARD MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

24 1. A nominee should be on a professional level and
25 successful in his/her field.
2. A nominee should not be related to anyone on the
City Council, the Black Archives Board or any

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1 employee of the Archives.
2 3. Board members should be eligible to serve no
3 more than two consecutive terms.
4 4. Board Members may not choose to hire any person
5 who is a relative or has close connections with a
6 board member.
7 5. Proper minutes should be taken at every Board
8 function and copies forwarded to the Mayor and City
9 Council.
10 6. Duties of the Board Officers should be clearly
11 listed in detailed official by-laws that are
12 followed by the Board.
13 7. The Board should set policy and be responsible
14 for all assets and management of the Black Archives.
15 It should not manage the Archives on a day-to-day
basis.
8. The Board shall have the duty of hiring and
firing employees of the Archives.
9. The membership of the Board of Directors should
be no less than two-thirds African American, but
should also include members of other ethnic
backgrounds to give the Board a broader perspective
and to create a broad base of support in the
metropolitan area that transcends all artificial
boundaries.

14 THE DIRECTOR OF THE BLACK ARCHIVES

15 1. The Director of the Black Archives is to be

chosen by a majority vote of the Board.

16 2. A job description and qualifications should be
generally determined before any applicant is
17 considered.

18 3. The Director should be chosen for his/her
professional background and ability to meet the
public. The Director is the one person who will
19 have the most contact with the public and will
determine much of the attitude the public takes
20 towards the Archives.

21 4. If finances do not allow the Board to hire a
Director, then this position may be joined with the
Archivist, but this should not be considered a
22 permanent arrangement.

23 THE MUSEUM

24 The Black Archives of Mid-America is more than a
repository of historic documents and photographs.
25 It also possesses an enviable collection of historic
artifacts. In its current location of limited space

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1 the Archives has created display areas for its
museum exhibits. Many of these items have a
2 significant monetary value. The qualifications for
archives expertise are far different from those of a
3 museum director. It is unlikely that in the
foreseeable future the Black Archives could afford a
4 Director, an Archivist and a Museum Director.
Perhaps a Director of the Archives could be chosen
5 who would have a real interest in black history
artifacts, even if he/she has no formal training or
6 experience in this field. Setting up interesting
exhibits is an excellent way to attract interest in
7 the Archives and to encourage interest in Black
history in general. This is an area that needs
8 careful thought on how to integrate the care of this
material with the very different archival methods.

9 THE ARCHIVIST

10 This is a critical position for the maintenance of
the Black Archives.

11 1. This person will arrange the archival material
in an accepted archival order for accessibility of
12 the material for patrons.

13 2. The Archivist should use the latest technology
to preserve and maintain the material.

14 3. The Archivist is to insure that the patron does
not handle any material in such a way that they are
15 damaged. It is preferable that rare and/or
important documents and photographs be photocopied

- 16 or digitized for patron use.
- 17 4. The Archivist is to maintain records that
accession donations and inventory the archives
holdings.
- 18 5. Strict security of archival material must be
maintained by the Archivist and the Director.
- 19 6. The Archivist is to maintain ties with the other
professional archivist in the greater Kansas City
20 area and attend their area meetings. This will
allow the Archivist to maintain current standard
21 practices of archival storage and maintenance.
- 22 7. It is almost essential that the Archivist have a
substantial background in African American history
and culture.

23

THE ARCHIVIST AND OTHER STAFF MEMBERS

24

- 25 1. The Archivist may use others to help with the
archival process. If revenue is available, these
positions may be filled with paid employees hired by

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- 1 the Board with the Archivist being involved with the
interviews and the hiring process.
- 2 2. The Director and Archivist may/should form an
ARCHIVES COMMITTEE to assist the Archivist in any
3 way he/she deems will help the Archives carry out
its mission.

4

FRIENDS OF THE ARCHIVES

5

- 6 A Friends of the Archives should be organized as
soon as possible. This may be an independent
organization or one directed by the Black Archives.
- 7 1. It is to raise money to support the archives,
especially in purchasing desired materials that are
8 not available by donation.
- 9 2. The Friends of the Archives should reach out
into the community to help facilitate donations of
historic materials to the Archives.
- 10 3. Other directions of this group should be
explored to make this organization as meaningful and
11 enjoyable to its members as possible.

12 The Black Archives should work to erase the negative
image the public has of the Archives. This should
13 be a primary goal to get the Archives back on its
feet. This is needed for funding, housing, staff
14 and donations of historic material, all of which are
absolutely necessary. The Black Archives should not
15 be allowed to develop on its own without supervision
and guidance from outside.

16

17 It is hoped that the Black Archives will make all of
 Kansas City proud and supportive that it is here?

18 *****

19

20 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED
 PEOPLE

21 Kansas City, Missouri Branch
 1601 East 18th Street, Suite 212
22 Kansas City, Missouri 64108
 (816) 421-1191
23 Fax: (816) 421-4939

24 DATE: August 17, 2006
 TO: Attorney General Jeremiah "Jay" Nixon
25 FROM: Anita L. Russell, President
 Kansas City, Missouri NAACP Branch

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1 SUBJECT: Future of Black Archives of Mid America

2 The Kansas City, Missouri Branch of the National
3 Association for the Advancement of Colored People
 (NAACP) is very concerned that we are here this
4 evening to discuss the fate of the Black Archives of
 Mid America. The status of the Archives should
 never have gotten to this point.

5
6 As many of you know, the Black Archives has one of
 the largest collections of African American art,
 memorabilia and historical materials in the region.
7 It is also a place to learn the history and
 lifestyles of prominent African American leaders of
8 Kansas City. Since people of color are still
 excluded when American history is told, it is
9 especially important that we preserve the history
 and contributions of African Americans.

10
11 The NAACP would like to see the Black Archives
 reestablished and adequate funding secured. Board
12 member selections should be based on skill sets
 needed to not only bring the Archives back into
13 compliance, but to position the Archives as a viable
 21st Century institution. The Board needs to be
 diverse and representative of the community.
14 Persons selected to the Board should have the time
 to fulfill their duties and possess strong business
15 management skill sets, particularly in key areas
 such as marketing, legal and fiscal expertise. The
16 Board should also include other members, such as
 neighborhood and community leaders.

17 The NAACP, along with others in the community, were
18 not aware of the condition the Black Archives is
19 currently in until it appeared in the newspaper.
20 Communication is very important. Consequently, a
21 communications plan should be developed and the
22 community should be kept informed of developments,
23 the needs and any programs or events in support of
24 the Black Archives.
25
26 This community needs the Black Archives to be the
27 educational resource and the keeper of African
28 American culture that its founder, Horace Peterson,
29 III, wanted it to be. In addition, this is a key
30 legacy we want to leave for our young people in this
31 metropolitan Kansas City area.
32
33 The NAACP is supportive of efforts to bring it back

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1 to fruition, positioning the Archives into national
2 and international prominence as well. Please
3 contact us to assist in this effort, as we have
4 recommendations for enhancing the Black Archives of
5 Mid America.
6
7 *****
8
9 ASSOCIATED BUSINESS ADVISORS
10 P.O. Box 300137
11 Kansas City, Missouri 64130
12 (816) 921-5966
13
14 FROM: MARGO A. WEATHERBY, MBA
15
16 The Black Archives of Mid America, Thursday,
17 8/17/2006
18
19 The need for such an organization is vital to our
20 community. However, without accountability and the
21 ability to compete, we will end up in the same
22 position. I'm so glad to see the public interest.
23 Now that we are here, let's act on our conviction to
24 our community. As a past chairman of the Black
25 Archives, I am willing to add my volunteerism to the
26 success of the preservation and continuation of a
27 great organization.
28
29 I met Horace in 1974. A fresh-faced college
30 student, at home for the summer, Horace's enthusiasm
31 rubbed off on me and I volunteered with the
32 organization as they moved into the fire station. I
33 went on my life's journey, but continued to offer my

18 assistance whenever needed. In 1994, I was asked
19 to join the Board of Directors. It was truly a
highlight of my life. I was proud to be a part of
an organization that contributed so much to my
community.

20
21 So today as maybe a not so fresh-faced student, I
22 still believe in the vision and I am willing to
offer my commitment to the Black Archives of Mid
America.

23 *****

24

25

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1 FROM: Sharon and Yvonne

2 Jay, The State Archivist Dr. Ken Winn has agreed to
3 send his staff of trained specialists to come to
4 Kansas City and work the preservation of the
documents and contents of the archives at NO COST to
the Archives. The Department of Natural Resources
as also stated they are willing to send trained
archivists to Kansas City at NO COST to the Black
Archives.

6 *****

7

8 FROM: Sister Jg Obleus, C.F.O. GGard Co. &
Chairperson V.A.P.O. K.C. Chapter
Contact: (816) 405-9953

9 17 August 2006

10 Ad Hoc Meetings: Community Members
K.C. Public Library

11 Board & Staff
12 Staff & Training

13 Call Anthony Arnold about next public meeting.

14 Debra Hall/10 year volunteer
Sandra McFadden Weaver

15 Archivist training for Staff

16 Greetings and Hatup.

17 My name is Ms. Jg Obleus. I am the administrative
18 assistant who was on staff for 7-1/2, up to the date
of the death of Honorable Horace M. Peterson.

19 On this day, August 17, 2006, we black/African
Americans are celebrating the birthday of the
20 Honorable Marcus M. Garvey who was the founder of
the "Red/Black/Yellow" flad which Horace flew high
21 over the Black Archives of Mid-America. As we have
this pre-speaker event, I must say to my
22 disappointment we meet under the circumstances of
even having a discussion or public hearing on
23 whether or not we keep the "Black Archives of
Mid-America."

24
25 Do we want to keep it open?

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1 Do you want to keep any other museum open in Kansas
City? The Black Archives is needed in this
2 community as much as any other museum here in the
Kansas City area. Why do blacks have to be led by
3 the white politicians to handle our cultural
heritage? We don't. We need all the support you
4 give all the other museums in the K.C. area. The
Archives is fundamental in the fact of giving the
5 true cultural and history of the races of all
people, which as we all know that all races derive
6 from the African race.

7 As we move forward to preserve what has no business
being on the chopping block of non-existance, let's
8 be real. It appears that anything concerning the
culture of black history can only exist if the white
9 population can control the situation. That is plain
thinking.

10
11 As the financial community support all the other
museums, support the Archives as you see it without
the prejudice that is existent in the State of
12 Missouri. As we continue to look at how the history
of blacks is on stagnation on 18th and Vine Street,
13 the City chose to paint signs and windows as opposed
to allowing black-owned businesses to occupy the
14 buildings. Paint as opposed to real-live business
is a lie. We the black community are the reason
15 throughout the world talks about 18th and Vine, not
for the fake storefronts. The reason we want to
16 keep and instill in the hearts and minds of the
black community and the rest of the black-originated
17 population again that originated in Africa, should
all support the funding and continuation of the
18 Black Archives of Mid-America.

19 Those who have put the archives on Front Street,

20 please wake up to reality. This institution is
needed and must remain and remain without the
21 European population making an attempt to confiscate
and steal our history as has been done for the past
22 100 years and allow our community to operate and
control our history's destiny. Nobody was worried
23 about us handling business or who can handle
preserving our perservation until now. What's up?

24 May Horace Peterson and the spirit of the Honorable
25 Marcus M. Garvey and the "Red/Black/Green" live on.

The struggle continues.

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1 *****
2
3 FROM: Josea M. Tyler

4 The Black Archives has been a well kept secret
hidden up from the 18th and Vine corridor. IT needs
5 to be marketed so that Kanas Citians can have the
opportunity to visit the facility, do research, and
6 contribute as a volunteer, tour guide, or offer up
some items that would be valuable to our history.

7
8 I have been working with the Archives for over 10
years as a volunteer and as a member of the Board.
9 Much help is needed to keep our history alive and
the legacy that Horace Peterson set for Kansas City.
10 I will continue to support.

11 P.S. I do hope that the items my mother donated
(currently on display) will be preserved for future
12 generations.

13 *****

14 FROM: J.H. Robinson
15 TO: ag@ago.mo.gov
DATE: 8/16/2006 7:45 p.m.
16 SUBJECT: Concerning The Black Archives Hearing
(8/17/06)

17 CONCERNING THE BLACK ARCHIVES
18 TO: The Attorney General of Missouri, Jay Nixon
FROM: J. Hammond Robinson
19 The American Space Culture Foundadtion
3928 Chestnut, KCMO 64130
816-861-6630

20 JHRobin153@aol.com

21 Dear Attorney General Nixon,

22 Although I've registered with Sarah Madden to make a
23 presentation at the hearing on the future of the
24 Black Archives, (Gem Theater, August 17, 2006) I
won't be able to attend.

25 Please place my brief emailed testimony into the
record for consideration.

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1 The American Space Culture Foundtion (ASCF) was
2 established in the 1980s as a 501c3 educational
3 organization with the purpose of stimulating
interest in outer space.

4 As an African American, the establishment of the
5 ASCF was my response to the situation of the black
6 community. (In order to be prepared to participate
in the industrialization of space -- the new
frontier -- one has to be very well educated and
know how to work in a team.)

7 Shortly after returning to the Kansas City Metroplex
8 in 1992, I approached the Archives with a project
9 which was, at that time, beyond their capacity, but
which I believe is now the proper time to present
again.

10 In essence, the project builds on the historic
11 accomplishments of black Americans, but emphasizes
12 accomplishments in relation to the space program.
It would have been impossible for NASA's program to
advance without the contribution of black Americans.

13 To highlight this fact it would be fitting and
14 appropriate for the Black Archives to not only
15 present the social and political accomplishments of
black Americans, but also present the space-related
inventions and accomplishments of black Americans.

16 In order to ensure the relevance and the future of
17 the Black Archives, I propose that NASA's archives
18 be combed for about 120 examples of space technology
19 created by black Americans, and that The Space Works
(in Hutchenson, Kansas) fabricate museum-quality
20 reproductions of the 120 examples; divide the
collection into three or more exhibits, and send
them on tour around the country. The exhibits could
begin with photographs and written descriptions.

21 I realize this project is rather ambitious, but the
22 payoff will be much great than the effort needed to
bring it together.

23 Needless to say, as founder of the ASCF, I am
24 available to participate in such a project should
such a direction for the Black Archives be
25 determined to be good and worthy.

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1 Thank you for holding this hearing and for this
2 opportunity.

3
4 Written testimony 8-17-06

5 FROM: Donna Sanders
6 Leatherwood Enterprises
1601 E. 18th Street, #131
7 Kansas City, Missouri 64108?
816-842-7546
fax: 816-513-3276

8 TO: Attorney General

9 SUBJECT: Black Archives Public Hearing Coment

10 I believe that new board members should be
11 responsible persons. Evidence of responsibility
would be: No past due taxes (re-edit scores of
\$700+).

12
13 In addition, I would prefer that the Board is
diverse in gender, race and age. There should be
14 people in their 20s, 30s and 40s on the board.

15 Additionally, unless there are rare and significant
16 circumstances, I oppose service any any who have
previously served. This way we can get some fresh
17 ideas. In addition, this would eliminate continued
"politically and socially exclusive groups."

18 Finally, there should be a five-year term limit.

19
20 WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF BEA SANDERS, COMMUNITY
SUPPORTER
21 816-926-6200
8/17/06

22 Partner with other federal, state and municipal
23 agencies to present and share the Archives' rich
24 history and to enhance its holdings.
25 The National Archives Records Center is located in
Kansas City and would be a good resource for the
newly established board to learn how to manage the

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1 archives.
2 Give careful and thorough consideration to selecting
3 people who share the mission of the Black Archives
4 and provide leadership training to all the
principals selected on the board. Try and keep the
Archives in the historical Vine district?

5 *****

6 FROM: Tina Marie Perry
8/17/2006

7
8 I am interested in supporting the Black Archives of
Mid-America. My mother was employed there years
ago.

9
10 My sister and I had the pleasure of researching
history about my father, Perry, whom owned a
business on Vine many years ago.

11
12 I, Tina Marie Perry, can be contacted at
TPerry7514@mcckc.edu, or 816-861-6432.

13 Cordially,

14 Tina Marie Perry
3032 Askew
15 Kansas City, MO 64158

16 *****

17 FROM: Ella Tolbert
816-921-4201

18
19 My name is Ella J. Tolbert. As a former resident of
Beacon Hill (area 31 north to 21st, Troost and
Paseo), I authored a book about its rich history.
20 Not that my interest in preserving history began
with that work, but the research involved made me
21 well aware of the lack of information centered at
the Black Archives.
22

23 Sadly, visits to the Archives website revealed many
unidentified persons and occasion and most of my
24 information came from the Library's website. This
was in 1998 and even visits to the Archives produce
25 little, the recordkeeper unaware of a street called
West Paseo just a few blocks to the southwest!

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1 Having said all this, I am anxious that a method be
found by which this historic archives can be
2 restored in a place where all the items stored
elsewhere can be properly catalogued and restored.
3 One of my favorite exhibits was one of KC nurses.
That was special because my mother was a nurse and
4 worked at Wheatley Hospital. So many areas of my
life touch on the "old things" that history is made
5 of.

6 I'm better knowledgeable about how to research than
I was five years ago. But I long to get back into
7 the many boxes. That won't be possible until the
Archives is opened again. I am willing and able to
8 donate time toward that effort in any capacity.

9 Anxious for the next INFORMATIVE meeting!

10 *****

11 FROM: Frank Tyler
8/17/06

12 Horace Peterson was the only person who could have
13 kept the Black Archives open today. We as black
people should have not let the Black Archives be
14 allowed to be closed even today. We need people in
the Black Archives today who know how to run the
15 Black Archives and keep it open and black people
should attend the Archives to understand where our
16 ancestors came from and had to put up with.

17 *****

18 THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
Architecture Program
19 School of Architecture and Urban Design

20 August 17, 2006
Re: Mid America Black Archives Public Hearing

21 Dear Honorable Jay Nixon,

22 I am an assistant professor at KU and have used the
23 Mid America Black Archives many times since I moved

24 to Kansas City in 2003. I would like to testify in
support of keeping the collection together. One of
25 the difficulties is that the access to the
collection is difficult and there is limited work
space for research, although I have been given a

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1 great deal of help by the staff of the archives.

2 I know it is better if the Mid America Black
Archives could maintain its autonomous identity, but
3 unless it is given a consistent source of income,
the logistics of maintaining and adding to the
4 collection would be mitigated if it was physically
tied to other institutions.

5
A connection with the Mutual Musicians Foundation
6 could be possible with appropriate funding since
that institution also has a rich history and deep
7 ties in the neighborhood and an interest in
displaying its history. Perhaps converting the
8 Armory on the corner of Highland and 18th into a
museum/archives? That way the neighborhood would
9 continue to benefit from the presence of the
archives and they could maintain their respective
10 identities.

11 As a last resort, the collection could be taken
under the auspices of other local archives such as
12 the Missouri Valley Room at the KCMO Public Library
or, less preferred because of the limited
13 accessibility, the Western Historical Manuscript
Collection, UMKC Campus or even with their display
14 area, the Kansas City Museum.

15 Thank you,

16 Marie Alice L'Heureux, PhD
Assistant Professor
17 Kansas City Urban Design Studio
School of Architecture and Urban Design
18 913-432-4770

19

20

21 *****

22

23

24

25

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1 "M. C. Richardson"

2 UMMA

W.E.B. DuBois Learning Center

3 1973

United Minority Media Association, Inc. (UMMA) 1974

4 Black Achives of Mid America, Inc.

1974

5 THREE INSTITUTIONS

W.E.B. DuBois Teaches it

6 UMMA Publicizes it

Black Achives Record it

7

ALL MUST STAY

8 Kansas City Missouri Regional and National

You know what you must Do. Youth and all Citizens you must

9 support, attend and participate in our events.

Powers to be. Give Bill Curtis and Annette Curtis your

10 strongest consideration to become board members (both are
non black in color and race but their heart and

11 contributions can far exceed what most blacks

and/or African Americans have in their library or gifts

12 made available by other blacks. Their studies and knowledge

of Blacks in Independence and they role in researching and

13 what they did for that community is second to none.

I Thank You. I'm available to offer support and along with

14 my member Carter Broadcast Group, UMMA MEDIA NETWORK and

United Minority Media Association, Inc. UMMA)

15

16

17

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